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A "Brook by the Way"

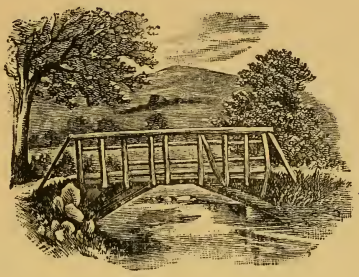
JESSE EDGERTON.



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PRESENTED BY

A
"BROOK BY THE WAY"



A VOLUME OF POEMS

BY

JESSE EDGERTON

"I saw the mountains stand
Silent, wonderful and grand,
Looking out across the land,
When the golden light was falling
On distant dome and spire;
And I heard a low voice calling,
Come up higher, come up higher,
From the lowland and the mire,
From the mist of earth desire,
From the vain pursuit of pelf,
From the attitude of self;
Come up higher, come up higher."

Jas. G. Clarke

DAMASCUS, OHIO, 1913

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AUG 19 1914



Jesse Edgerton

PREFATORY.

I do not intend to offer an apology for writing this book, but rather to give a reason for doing so. In my earlier life, having written a number of verses, some of them comprised in this volume, and not being deeply impressed with their value, I was on the point of destroying them, when the partiality of members of my family for some of these productions intervened, and saved them from the fate which, perhaps, they deserved.

For years past, the writer has felt a care not to write anything, the tendency of which, might be to lead away from Friendliness.

How far he has succeeded, we leave the reader to judge. A few of these poems were written in a vein of pleasantry, but none, I hope will hurt the tender feelings of any of my readers; while, on the other hand, many of them were written under a feeling of duty, and the author has had a humble belief, that inspiration was at times experienced, in this, as in other, and more distinctly religious service.

Sorrow and affliction have been factors, under the Divine blessing, in the development of a deep human sympathy, toward the sick and sorrowing, and the writer has hoped that this feature in his verses may make them to many, as the title chosen for this little book suggests, "A Brook by the Way."

I should come far short of my duty, if I failed to give full credit to my dear family, and kind friends, whose encouragement and sympathy, were so freely and spontaneously given in the task of collecting and arranging these literary waifs for publication.

Some of them have been written for private occasions, and could not be expected to awaken public interest; yet we have a hope that in the somewhat extended acquaintance of the author, there may be many who will find the perusal of this little volume to be worth while.

To all such we commend the book, with the hope that through its influence, some weary, chastened souls may take fresh courage to press forward in the journey of life; and the feeling that perhaps the author had a duty in sharing these inspirations and aspirations with a larger circle of friends, winning for them a wider hearing, and increasing their possibilities of usefulness, has been an especial reason for placing this book before the public.

Jesse Edgerton.

Damascus, Ohio, 1913.

INTRODUCTORY.

The writer has neither intention nor desire to seek notoriety or popularity through an autobiography; nevertheless, recognizing the fact that our interest in any book is enhanced by some knowledge of the author, either personal or written, it has appealed to me, to introduce myself very briefly to my readers, by a hasty sketch of my life and parentage. Then too, circumstances related herein may give reason for some of the poems, and render them more easily understood.

My father, Joseph Edgerton, a well known minister in The Society of Friends, came with his parents, from North Carolina, in 1804, and settled in Belmont County, Ohio, about five miles from where the Yearly Meeting house now stands, one mile east of Barnesville.

In the year 1818 he was married to Charity Doudna, who with her parents, John and Miriam Doudna, had also removed to Belmont County from North Carolina.

The youngest of fifteen children of this marriage, I was born near Barnesville, Ohio, Seventh Month 12, 1845. Born and reared amid Friendly surroundings, and blest with Godly and consistent parents, my life received a strong and enduring impulse toward Quakerism, for which, in more mature years, when the religion of my childhood and environment, became the religion of my conviction and my choice, I have been devoutly thankful.

My education consisted of several years' work in the Friends' primary school at "The Ridge," near Barnesville, supplemented by two winter terms at Mt. Pleasant Boarding School in the early sixties.

The winter of 1864-5 saw my first effort at school teaching, in the Friends' school at Flushing, Ohio, this being succeeded by a number of other schools in after years. The following spring, I went with my parents to Iowa, whither they were removing, assisted them in getting fixed up in their new home, and in the autumn of 1865 returned to Ohio and was married to Semira Stratton, daughter

of Edward and Mary Stratton, of Columbiana County, where we made our home.

Six children were born of this union, viz., Mary Anna, Edward J., J. Howard, Arthur H., Wilson and S. Ellen. Edward J. died at the age of ten weeks, the others living to maturity.

In the autumn of 1877, we removed to Keokuk County, Iowa. Here, after more than a year of ill health, my dear wife died, on Ninth Month 11th, 1878.

"In Memoriam" and several other poems in this volume were written following this bereavement. With my motherless family, I remained at Coal Creek that winter, teaching the Friends' school, and in the spring of 1879 returned to Ohio, finding homes for my children among Friends. On Third Month 29th, 1882, I was married to Susan Gilbert, daughter of Benjamin and Lydia Gilbert, of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and we at once moved to Columbiana, Ohio, where for several years I was engaged in business. Here in 1884 was born our son, Walter Gilbert Edgerton, the only child of this marriage.

Right here I want to say that I wish to bear testimony to her faithfulness as a wife to me and a mother to my children.

These years of life with their cares and duties, trials and afflictions, were preparing us, better, perhaps, than we knew, for the responsibilities which were coming to us in the service of the Church.

In the spring of 1895, under a religious concern, with the hearty concurrence of my dear wife, also of a committee of our Yearly Meeting of Ministers and Elders, and with a minute of unity and concurrence from my Monthly Meeting, I accompanied Hannah H. Stratton and Lydia K. Lightfoot on a religious visit to Great Britain and Ireland.

On this errand I was absent from home eighteen weeks, and traveled over 10,000 miles. Soon after my return from this visit I was recorded as a minister, since which time, with the concurrence of my Friends, several visits have been made, both within and without the limits of my own Yearly Meeting.

In the autumn of 1900 my wife and I were asked to assume the duties of Superintendent and Matron at Friends Boarding School at Barnesville, Ohio, on account of the resignation of William and Dorothy Ashton, and went thither in the Second Month, 1901.

Five years of arduous, yet interesting service followed, during which time my wife's health failed, and in the autumn of 1905

we resigned our positions there, and were released in the following spring, thence removing to Damascus, where at our home on Fountain Farm, we again enjoyed the pleasure of home life. Here too, after many months of failing strength, both mental and physical, my dear companion died, Eighth Month 28th, 1908.

This deep affliction occasioned the writing of several poems to be found in this volume, "Not Knowing," "At Rest," and others.

Two years later, Eighth Month 24th, 1910, I was united in marriage to Elizabeth A. McGrew, a beloved elder, of Short Creek Monthly Meeting, living at Colerain, Ohio, and we at once settled in our new home, "The Maples," Damascus, Ohio.

Here, convenient to Meeting, and the accommodations that a country village can afford, in touch with the world by telephone and inter-urban trolley service, surrounded by kind and congenial friends and neighbors, and blest by the dearest of homes, and the sweetest of home ties, we desire to be sufficiently thankful to our kind Heavenly Father for the infinite love and mercy that have attended us all these years, and trusting that He will enable us to follow implicitly His spiritual guidance, and when the end shall come, that there may be for us

"Some humble door among Thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade, where sin and striving cease,
And flows forever, through Heaven's green expansions
The river of Thy peace."

Jesse Edgerton.



"THE MAPLES" Damascus, Ohio

Oh home! most blessed spot on earth!
Where constant love and kindness reign
Within the family domain;
Where the staunch virtues have their birth,
Which make our manhood truly great;
The hope and honor of the state!
What potent force is thine that turns
The heart where'er we roam to thee?
Thy fireside altar ever burns,
The pole star on our stormy sea,
Thy sacred influence still must be
The corner stone whereon are built
The bulwarks of our liberty.

See Snow Storm—Page 126

FOREWORD.

Go, little book, into the homes
Where love and peace are dwelling,
Their glad fruition, in the life
To come, through faith foretelling.

Go to the homes of those who dwell
Beneath the clouds of sorrow,
Touching the chords that may awake
Hope for a brighter morrow.

Go where affliction's heavy hand
On human hearts is falling,
And where, from the deep gloom of death
Are silenced voices calling.

I, too, have traveled where it seemed
That every hope must languish,
And dipped the ink that traced my verse,
From my own heart's deep anguish.

Bear to the mourning and bereaved,
Some sympathetic token,
From one whose soul's profoundest depths
By grief have been upbroken.

From one whose lips have drained the cup
From Marah's bitter fountain,
Yet glad to view the "Promised land"
Of rest, from Nebo's mountain.

And if the message proves a balm
To soothe some wounded feeling,
Or if it point some weary soul
To the sure "Fount of healing",

However rude my humble verse,
In style howe'er deficient,
The motive for this book is won,
And my reward sufficient.

A BROOK BY THE WAY.

Oh, purling brook beside the way!
Whose sparkling waters dance and play
Against its banks of grass and sedge
Down sloping to the waters edge,
What blessings from thy fountains lie
Outspread beneath the summer sky!

Rich offering from the silent hills,
Whose benison the valley fills,
Refreshing with thy liquid lips
All nature's wild companionships.
And bringing joy and happiness
Thy wanton wanderings to bless.

Brook by the way! how slowly rise
Thy mist clouds to the waiting skies!
Till, from God's storehouse, come again
Blessings of world-reviving rain;
So nature's plans unite today,
And life goes singing on its way.

Oh, may our course, like thine abound
With blessings to the world around!
Sweet ministries in quiet ways,
And hidden channels through the maze
Of earthly things, until our way
Emerges into brighter day.

A brighter day of happiness,
Without the clouds of earth's distress;
A day of soft unfading light,
That knows no coming of the night;
Where the brook's counterpart shall be
Eternity's unbounded sea.

That crystal sea before the throne,*
Whereon the Almighty Presence shone
To him of Patmos, on whose eyes
The glory of that glad surprise
Burst with a splendor from above,
The Christ's apocalypse of love!

*See 4th Chapter of Revelations.

NATURE'S MUSIC.

1860.

There is music in the sere leaves
That rustle in the breeze,
There is music in the sighing wind
That moans among the trees.

There is music in the woodland
Where budding flowers are springing,
Where tinted buds are opening,
And merry birds are singing.

There is music in the summer shower,
That cheers the thirsty ground,
There is music in the fragrant bower,
With busy bees around.

There is music in the solemn swell
Of ocean's ceaseless roar,
Where curling waves in angry chase
Are breaking on the shore.

There is music in the howling storms
That through the forests crash,
Where hills are rocked by the thunder's roar,
Where the vivid lightnings flash.

There is music in the waterfall,
And in the whispering stream,
That dances down the sunny vale
Like the rippling of a dream.

There is music breathing all around,
O'er mountain, plain and sea,
But sweeter still the loving words
Of the friends so dear to me.

DEATH OF DE SOTO.

1860.

Written at the age of fifteen years, and the first poem the author had published.

Low murmured the wind through the wilderness wide,
Where the broad Mississippi rolled on in its pride,
While on its green banks, as the waves rolled away,
The warriors of Spain watched the close of the day.

There the willow's long branches were bathed in the
flood,
And there the live oak in magnificence stood,
And through the thick foliage that waved in the
wind,
The Indian saw gleaming, the bright cross behind.

Like the deer of the forest, the hunter before,
The terrified savage fled fast from the shore,
As the steel armored conquerors, onward they came,
Leaving ruin behind them, from ball, steel, and flame.

But their stately commander leaned sadly apart,
With gloom on his brow, and despair in his heart;
For far from the land of the cedar and vine,
He had long sought in vain for the wealth of the
mine.

But now the bright glare of his banner was dim,
And the trumpet's shrill notes had no music for him,
For despair on his forehead had sealed her sad token,
And the tones of the soldier, betrayed him heart-
broken.

Lament.

"The sunset's golden dyes are painting now
The hills and valleys of this western land,
While I, through summer's heat and weariness,
Have led for wealth, my small, but gallant band.

"Is it for this, through western lands to roam,
Vainly in search of treasures of the mine?
Is it for this I left my smiling home
Beneath the snowy summits of the Appenine?

"Is it for this I braved the ocean storm?
Is it for this I crossed the angry deep?
To lay amid these wilds my weary form,
Far from the land where my forefathers sleep?

"Here, where around my grave throughout the night
The hungry wolf in lonely watch shall prowl,
Or ghastly glow of ignis-fatuus light,
Rouse from his midnight rest the hooting owl.

"Even now, me-thinks, the panther's scream I hear,
The wild bear's hoarser growl to it replying;
The startled night bird spreads its wings in fear
And swiftly through the wild-wood waste is flying.

"Oh! I have watched in youth, when but a boy,
The ships careering o'er the boundless main.
And saw, Oh, how it thrilled my heart with joy!
The bright cross blazing on the flag of Spain.

"I longed to bear that flag to distant lands,
To see it planted on some unknown shore,
Where wild and free, roamed Indian robber bands,
Who ne'er saw banner on their soil before.

"But now ambition swells my heart no more,
No more my eager spirit thirsts for gain,
All, all I ask is but to see that shore,
The vine-clad hills and vales of sunny Spain.

"Alas, that land I never more shall see!
Ne'er see again my own, my native home!
Nor gaze on southern heavens so deeply blue,
Beneath whose smile in youth I loved to roam.

"Ah, no! my race is now already run,
Death sets his pallid seal upon my brow,
Farewell, my comrades! life's long waning sun
Sets in the darkness of oblivion now."

* * * *

He ceased, for life's spark from his bosom had fled,
And the soldier's proud form now lay pulseless and dead,
With his head on his shield, and his hand on his sword,
And Spain's banner around him, which once he adored.

By the "Father of Waters" they made his lone grave,
Where the green leaf is wet by the dash of his wave,
And at midnight's still hour, in the silence and gloom,
He was borne to the rest of his wilderness tomb.

No mortal said mass for the soul of the dead,
No priest offered prayer, and no service was read;
But his dirge through the forest the wild breezes rung,
And the broad Mississippi his funeral chant sung.

OUR FATHER'S DEATH.

1866.

'Twas autumn; summer's golden reign
Had ceased, and o'er the hills and streams,
Over the woodland and the plain
The yellow autumn sunshine gleams.

The forest boughs, which through the long
Bright days of summer gently swayed
To every breeze that passed along,
Were tinged with autumn's golden shade.

The songs of the departing birds
Were growing fainter day by day,
And borne upon the breeze was heard,
Slowly and sad, their plaintive lay.

Some had already plumed their wings,
For southern flight to sunnier skies,
'Mid far palmetto groves to sing
Where summer verdure never dies.

A few remained, as loath to part
With all they loved upon the plains;
Sometimes they sang, but on the heart
Their music fell in mournful strains.

But sadder far than all of these,
Than songs of the departing birds
Than the wind's music through the trees,
Fell on our ears his parting words.

Sudden and fierce had been the course
Of fell disease upon his frame,
But yet he shrank not, all its force
Shook not his faith in Jesus' name.

Sadly around his bedside came,
Gathering again the stricken few,
Sorrow was weighing down each frame,
To bid our sire a last adieu.

Fervent and strong his prayers arose
To God from that low bed of death!
He prayed for us, the Church, and those
Who wandered from the narrow path.

Prayed that the power that shielded him
Might for his children's strength be given,
That Truth's pure light might not grow dim
But guide us to a home in Heaven.

How sad, and yet how sweet to see
The spirit take its upward flight!
To know the prisoned soul set free,
To bathe in Heaven's eternal light.

Ah! yes, 'twas hard to give him up,
To yield him to the silent grave,
But yet, 'tis ours to drink the cup
And bless the Almighty hand that gave.

Oh! may that hand be underneath,
His grace complete the work begun,
Enable us in truth to breathe
From contrite hearts, "Thy will be done".

But Oh, we'll miss him! Sad and lone
Must gather now that household band
In sorrow by the lone hearthstone
In that far-off and western land.

Winter's bleak winds are blowing now
Around that lonely prairie home!
Their icy breath upon his brow,
Never, aye, never more, may come.

Above his grave they still will sweep,
And sound a requiem o'er his tomb,
Pile high the snow in many a heap
Fantastic, 'round his narrow home.

Was it unmeet that he should die
Thus in the autumn of the year?
That his pure soul should soar on high
Ere yet decrepit age drew near?

As like the summer birds which fled,
Ere winter came to sunnier lands,
Our sire in death lay down his head,
But risen again, in glory stands!

Farewell, beloved father! may
Thy bright example guide us on,
To serve Jehovah in our day,
And gain the crown that thou hast won.

Oh, may thy precepts still survive!
Deep in our hearts forever lie!
That they may teach us how to live,
That they may fit us soon to die.

Farewell! when winter's storms are o'er,
When springtime comes to earth again,
Its robe of living green once more
Will clothe in beauty the broad plain!

And summer's gentle breath will wave
The tall rank grass above thy tomb!
And prairie flowers around thy grave
In the bright sunshine gaily bloom.

But when the autumn comes again,
And the mild south winds cease to blow,
When the corn harvest gilds the plain,
Will we, can we forget thee? no!

We will remember, then as now,
The virtuous life that crowned thy days,
And may the Almighty teach us how
To live to His and to thy praise.

THE BABY'S GRAVE.

1868.

There is a little mound of clay
 Heaped in the edge of yonder grove,
And underneath is laid away
 A little form we dearly love.

That little grave is covered now
 With a pure robe of spotless white,
And over it the wild winds blow,
 And sing his dirge by day and night.

Today, as standing by the spot,
 I bent above his silent clay,
Thinking upon our lonely home,
 And of the spirit passed away,

Me-thought that I could see, sweet child!
 In the white mantle spread around,
An emblem of thy purity,
 And of thy angel robes and crown.

'Twas hard to give thee up, dear one!
 So very sweet, so young and fair!
To yield thee as a precious lamb
 E'en to the tender Shepherd's care!

Ah yes! 'twas hard to give thee up!
 To close those soft blue eyes in death!
To feel no more on lip and cheek,
 The playing of thy gentle breath!

To fold those little hands that scarce
Had learned to mind the infant will,
To miss the smile which e'en in death
Upon his features lingered still.

We mourn, but not for thee, dear one!
But for ourselves the tears will flow,
Thy barque is anchored safe above,
While we must stand life's storms below.

'Tis true our home is sad and lone,
The cradle still is standing by,
But baby's voice no more is heard,
Nor mother's gentle lullaby.

Thy clothing gently laid away!
Un-needed by thy little form!
Far sweeter songs than ours are heard,
And whiter garments thou hast on!

We mourn, but Oh! we cannot wish
To call thee back to earth again!
To buffet with the storms of time,
And bear a share of sin and pain.

Oh happy spirit! safe at last,
Within the Shepherd's fold above!
Our little lamb within His arms,
Is basking in eternal love!

Oh, may'st thou watch in tender love,
Over thy erring parents' way!
And may thy memory still remain,
Reminding when we go astray!

That we may run our destined race,
Fulfill our Heaven-allotted task,
May stand before our Savior's face,
And meet thee, darling one, at last!

NEAR THE DEAD.

1870.

"A mound is in the graveyard,
A low and narrow bed,
No grass is growing on it,
And no marble at its head.
Ye may go and weep beside it,
Ye may kneel and kiss the sod,
But you'll find no balm for sorrow
In the cold and silent clod."

Emily C. Judson.

Near the dead! I sought the graveyard,
Where the mouldering body lies,
Of a loved one, now departed
To her home within the skies.

Standing by her grave in sorrow,
Vainly strove my heart to feel
E'en a passing, slight assurance
Of her presence, o'er me steal.

True indeed, the form and features,
E'en in death, to us so fair,
Cold and silent lay beneath me,
But the spirit was not there.

Still I stand within the chamber
Where that dying mother lay,
When her pure and ransomed spirit
Left its tenement of clay.

Sadly do its scenes remind me
Of the dear one gone before,
But no feeling of her presence
Greets me from the other shore.

Vainly do I seek to know it,
In the old familiar room,
'Mongst the friends she loved so fondly,
Or beside the silent tomb.

But when favored by the Master,
In his mercy ever fresh,
To pour out my soul before Him
In the "silence of all flesh".

When the peace He only giveth
Steals in quiet o'er my breast,
Then her spirit comes before me
In its shining livery drest.

And I feel that she is happy,
All her toils and trials o'er,
Safely housed from every trouble
On that bright and shining shore.

"ALL IS PEACE."

1870.

Last words of my mother-in-law, Mary Stratton.

"All is peace!" Oh, happy feeling!,
When the toils of life are o'er,
And the soul is waiting, longing,
But to reach the other shore.

"All is peace!" what simple, childlike
Trust in Him, whose powerful arm
Still is round about the righteous,
To preserve from every harm.

"All is peace!" and yet the valley,
Dark and dreadful, looms before,
And the swelling waves of Jordan
Must perforce be traveled o'er.

"All is peace!" the waiting spirit
Feels the Savior by her side,
And His arms of love enfold her,
He will bear her o'er the tide.

Bear her safely to the fountains
Whence the living waters flow,
Cause to rest upon the mountains
Where the trees of healing grow.

Clothe in robes of dazzling whiteness,
Place a harp within her hand,
And before His throne of glory
With the host angelic stand.

Joins her voice in matchless music,
With the songs that angels raise,
Tuning on their golden harp-strings,
Sweet hosannas to His praise.

RECOGNITION IN HEAVEN.

1870.

Shall we see each-other's faces
 When before the Throne we stand?
If through Christ's redeeming mercy
 We may reach that "Better land";
Where the crystal streams are flowing
 From their fountain clear and calm,
And the tree of life is growing
 For the nation's healing balm!

Shall we, in those realms of beauty,
 Know our loved ones gone before?
Who through grief, and tears, and suffering,
 Reached at last that happy shore?
Shall we know and fondly greet them,—
 Weary from the toil and strife
Of our tiresome pilgrim journey,
 Through the stormy paths of life?

Shall I know my precious father?
 He who watched my youthful years,
Sowing seeds within my hard heart,
 Tending, with his prayers and tears,
Sterile soil; yet, at the harvest,
 How his heart would leap for joy,
If among the sheaves incoming,
 He should find his wayward boy!

May the Lord reward his labors,
 Prophets in his stead upraise,
That his bread be from the waters,
 Gathered after many days.
May the banner that he carried
 For the Truth be kept on high!
That the cause, although it languish,
 May not wholly droop and die.

Shall I know my angel mother
In that bright and happy throng?
With a golden crown upon her,
On her lips eternal song?—
Oh! the loved ones who have left us,
Taken in their being's prime!
Shall we know, and fondly greet them
In that happy, heavenly clime?

One, I know full well, awaits us,
Beckons from the other side,
For I feel his precious influence
O'er the dark mysterious tide!
Short the space of time that blest us,
With the cherub's sweet sojourn!
Scarce three moons had come and left us,
Ere the spirit's swift return.

Still another link is added
To the chain that binds above
And another earth-cord loosened
In the Savior's tender love!
May we then go pressing forward,
With our eyes upon that shore,
Where beside the "Silent Waters"
We may meet to part no more.

GIVING BACK.

1870.

Written on the death of a child of Wm. H. and Sarah H. Blackburn.

"It must be sweet in child-hood to give back
The spirit to its Maker; ere the heart
Has grown familiar with the paths of sin,
And sown to garner up its bitter fruit".

L. H. Sigourney.

'Tis sweet to give back in the morning of life,
The soul to its Maker, the clay to its clay,
Ere the pain and the sorrow, the anguish and strife
Of the world shall arise to becloud its bright day.

While the soul is pure as the dew on the mountain,
Unsullied by guilt, and untarnished by sin,
The gateway that leads to the tree and the fountain
Of life was thrown open, the spirit passed in.

Yes, there where no tempest or storm can assail her,
She dwells in the glory of Heaven's endless day!
Oh! why should the loved ones who linger, bewail her?
Or mourn for the spirit to bliss called away?

But yet ye may weep, for no trial is deeper,
And tears for the loved ones upwelling will come,
Like those that were strewn at the grave of the sleeper,
When Jesus Himself wept at Lazarus' tomb.

But weep with rejoicing, that one who around her
Was shedding a halo of love all her own,
Has thrown off the shackles of being that bound her,
And stands with the host at the foot of the Throne.

IN RESIGNATION.

1871.

A metrical rendering of an anecdote published in a periodical.

Oh! when the friends we love the best,
 Are halting at the River's side,
Ere quitting yet the bounds of life,
 To launch upon the swelling tide.
'Tis sweet in this dark hour to feel
 The Christian's hope sustaining still,
And in the inmost soul to know
 Submission to the Almighty's will.

But Oh, how weak the human heart!
 How destitute of power or might
To lift the dark but kindly veil,
 That hides the future from our sight;
How weak to murmur e'en in thought,
 If not in open deed and word,
Against these dispensations fraught
 With tender mercy from the Lord.

But Oh! a mother's nameless love!
 In that dark hour of deepest gloom!
Remembering not to look above,
 Beyond the confines of the tomb.
Had centred all upon that form
 Of childish innocence and grace,
Whose pallid brow and palsied arm
 Too plainly told of death's embrace.

An only child!—united by
 The holiest of earthly ties,
Rarest of beauty seemed to lie
 On the white brow and dimming eyes;
So young—and must a mother's joy
 So soon in broken fragments lie?
"Oh, no," I cried, "it cannot be,
 My darling cannot, must not die!"

While overwhelmed with boundless grief,
A vision passed before my eyes;
I saw my darling boy revive,
And from the bed of death arise:
While swiftly passed the flying years,
And soon to manhood's age he came,
But vice and guilt had stained his soul,
And joined his hands to deeds of shame!

In vain a father's kind reproof!
In vain a mother's prayers and tears!
Farther he trod the path of sin,
As swiftly passed the circling years!
His lips had pressed the wine cup's brim,
Drained to its dregs the fiery flood,
To deeds of death it maddened him,
And stained his hands with human blood!

Oh, who can tell what agony
Must fill a mother's aching breast!
To see upon the gallows stand
A son in convict's mantle drest;
The fatal halter and the shroud!
The arms for hopeless mercy tost!
The cry that pierced my bursting heart,
As of a soul forever lost!—

The vision passed! the spell was broke,
And there the little infant lay!
A smile of angel sweetness spread
In beauty o'er the lifeless clay!—
From a full heart, on bended knees
Thanks to the God of Hosts were given,
That the pure lamb was safe at rest
Within the pearly gates of Heaven.

THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY.

1871.

Four years ago this very night,
In the darkness still and deep,
Our frail and beautiful Eddie fell
In the arms of death asleep.
And no one knew of the coming
Of the messenger pale and cold,
Or waked, as he wreathed his icy hand
In the baby's curls of gold.

And no one knew when the measure
Of his transient life was filled,
And no one knew when the beating
Of his throbbing pulse was stilled;
No one knew when the boatman
Over the river had come,
No one knew when the angels
Welcomed the spirit home!

How vividly rise before me
The thoughts of that lonely night,
When the soul of the innocent sleeper
Was freed for its upward flight;
For, asleep in his childish beauty,
We gently had laid him down,
Nor dreamed of the waiting angels,
And the golden harp and crown.

As sparks from the fire fly upward,
So the disembodied soul,
That never had known the touch of sin,
Was borne to its joyful goal;
And there in that clime of beauty,
Those realms so far away,
He dwells in the fadeless glory
Of Heaven's eternal day.

AMBROSE BOONE.

1871.

Ambrose Boone, a minister, from Canada, died suddenly at the home of Robert Ellyson, at Middleton, Ohio, Twelfth Month 7th, 1871, while on a religious visit to the meetings of Ohio Yearly Meeting. His remains were conveyed to his home in Ontario, Canada.

Fold his hands upon his bosom!
Gently lay the stranger down;
For the toils of life are ended,
He has won a Heavenly crown!
Stranger friends had gathered round him,
Watching o'er his couch of pain,
As the slender ties that bound him
To the world were cut in twain.

Far from home and all its pleasures,
From the home he loved so well,
Earnest in his Christian mission,
In a foreign land he fell.
Fell as came the solemn message
That his work on earth was done,
Foremost in the path of duty,
Falling with his armor on.

From beyond the ceaseless surging
Of Ontario's restless wave,
Came he in the Master's service,
With the message that He gave:
Yet before the task was finished,
In His boundless love, the Lord
Called him, may we hope in mercy,
Home to reap a rich reward.

In that land of fadeless beauty,
 Where the ransomed spirits dwell,
Where the glory far surpasses
 All that mortal tongue can tell,
Now released from pain and sorrow,
 Freed from every doubt and care,
He, we humbly trust, is mingling
 With the Church Triumphant there.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

1871.

Isaiah 35.

The solitary place shall smile,
 The wilderness be glad,
The arid desert's burning waste,
 In verdant robes be clad.
And lovely flowers upspringing there
 Shall glow in fadeless bloom,
To charm the eye and load the air
 With beauty and perfume.

The glory of the lofty hills
 Of Lebanon shall lie,
With Carmel's wealth of beauty there,
 To greet the ravished eye;
With all that Sharon's dewy fields
 Of excellence afford,
And overspreading all shall dwell
 The glory of the Lord.

Then shall the blind eyes open wide,
 Then shall the deaf one hear,
And music burst from unsealed lips
 In cadence wild and clear.
Then shall the lame man walk and leap,
 As the hart upon the hill,
Exultant in his new born strength,
 His joyous pulses thrill.

And there a highway shall be made,
 "A way of holiness",
Which naught unclean may travel in,
 Nor feet of sinners press.
No lion shall go up thereon,
 Nor any beast of prey,
But there the feet of the redeemed
 Shall tread its shining way.

And there the ransomed of the Lord
 Will Zion's courts surround,
With songs of angel sweetness,
 With joy and gladness crowned;
For there shall be no sorrow more,
 No sickness, no decay,
For grief shall all be turned to joy,
 And sighing flee away.

AN INTERCESSION.

1871.

"Oh! when the heart is full, when bitter thoughts
Come crowding quickly up for utterance,
And the poor common words of courtesy
Are such a very mockery, how much
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer."
—N. P. Willis.

God of Jeshurun! Thou who holds
In Thy almighty hand,
The waters of the mighty deep,
That wash the ocean strand;
Thou in whose balance are the hills
And giant mountains weighed,
By whose eternal arm of power
The universe was made!

Oh, Holy Father, wilt thou turn
Thy prayer-regarding ear,
And in Thy boundless wealth of love,
Our supplications hear?
Bestow Thy all-sufficient grace,
Point out life's winding way,
Subdue our hard rebellious hearts!
Teach us to watch and pray!

And Oh, be with our sisters!
The dear ones who today,
Upon love's hallowed altar
Gave their fond hearts away!
Keep them, Oh Holy Father,
In Thy unslumb'ring sight,
And grant Thy saving knowledge,
To guide their steps aright!

And Oh! if they grow weary,
In bearing life's great load,
If thorns and briers wound their feet
Upon its rugged road,
Oh Father, be Thou near them
In every trying hour!
Console them with Thy presence,
Sustain them by Thy power!

Correct their wayward wanderings,
From bonds of sin set free!
And draw them with Thy cords of love
Nearer to Heaven and Thee!
And with religion's armor
On-girded for the strife,
Armed with the sword of prayer to fight
In the battle field of life!

And grant that when the battle
Is over, they may stand
Prepared to strike their tents and cross
Into the "Promised Land";
Where joys await the righteous,
That mortals cannot know,
Where trees of healing flourish
And living waters flow.

NUPTIAL GREETING.

1871.

While pleasures surround you,
Since Hymen has bound you,
And friends gather round you,
 To share in your joy!
Your thoughts may you set not
Too much on your new lot,
Oh! may you forget not
 Earth's bliss has alloy!

May all men befriend you,
Rich blessings attend you,
And Heaven defend you
 In the journey of life!
Each acting his own part
Of life with a whole heart!
Of love each a counterpart,
 Husband and wife!

And brothers, we meet you,
As brothers we greet you,
And hope to entreat you,
 As brothers our own!
On the same journey bound,
With the same world around,
And the same battle-ground
 To be lost or be won!

May the vows you have taken,
For aye be unshaken,
And their memory awaken
 In thankful review,
God's strength in defending,
His love never ending,
Rich blessings attending
 Life's whole journey through!

OLD LETTERS.

1871.

Oh! what a throng of memories
 Arise in looking o'er
This pile of olden letters,
 Strewn on the chamber floor;
Received in days departed,
 From friends we loved so well,
Speaking in silent pathos,
 Their kind regard to tell!

Here's a heap of childhood's letters,
 Where the ink in copious flow,
Tells upon the blotted pages,
 Thoughts and scenes of long ago;
Scenes which wake the inmost feelings,
 And suffuse the eye with tears,
Scenes which memory loves to cherish
 Fondly through the passing years.

Here is one, a little missive
 Penned with neatness, and with care,
From a gentle friend of boyhood,
 Lofty brow, and dark brown hair;
Only one short day my junior,
 Made a friend so long ago;
May her mind retain its beauty
 As the seasons come and go.

Here's another which we nearly
In our haste had overpast,
Weak and trembling is the sentence
"In the hospital at last".
From a brother in the army,
"Slightly wounded, that is all".
With a hand forever crippled,
Shattered by a musket ball!

This is from the boundless prairies
Of what then was "Sunset land";
From beyond the Mississippi,
Written by a father's hand.
Years have passed since death released him,
Since the goal of life he won,
In the foremost ranks of duty,
Falling with his armor on.

What a heap of dainty letters,
Lying bound with ribbon there!
What but dainty love-effusions!
Cherished with the greatest care.
Brightly in the retrospective
Do life's golden moments lie,
And their dreams of love have glided
Into sweet reality.

Oh what changes have o'ertaken
Those whose names are written here!
Some are dead, and some are living,
Some afar, and others near;
These and other recollections
Sad and joyous, come and go,
As we scan these folded pages,
Written, read, so long ago.

FOUR PAIRS OF SHOES.

1871.

How many pairs of little shoes?
 One, two, and three, and four,
Placed with the heels against the wall,
 In a line upon the floor.
Eight little feet to fill them,
 Are snugly tucked in bed,
Nor hall nor parlor echo
 To the children's well known tread.

Six little feet are weary,
 Weary of work and play,
Trudging on in these little shoes
 The whole of this autumn day.
And two, perchance are as tired
 As any of them may be,
Though their only field of toil now,
 Is to stand on Mamma's knee.

Eight little feet, unsteady,
 To guide o'er the slippery way!
Eight little busy, wayward feet,
 That often will go astray!
Eight little eyes upon us,
 Watching, wherever we go!
Eight little ears to try our words,
 And the source from whence they flow!

Four little lambs for the Heavenly fold,
 For the world beyond the grave!
Each for a life of weal or woe,
 Each with a soul to save!
May God endue with wisdom,
 And aid us by His might,
In the path of life before us,
 To guide their steps aright!

WORDS OF WELCOME.

1871.

To Edward and Mary H. Stratton, on their marriage, Twelfth Month 27th, 1871.

While our loving friends and kindred
Kindly gather round us here,
We would fain a hearty greeting,
Gently whisper in thy ear!
Greet thee with a nobler title,
Than is won by wealth or fame,
Bid thee thrice a hearty welcome
In a mother's cherished name!

Coming from a home and fireside,
Guarded by parental love,
To an untried field of labor,
All its joy and toil to prove;
To the land of thy adoption,
To our pleasant "Household tree",
To our hearts and to our hearth-stones,
Gladly do we welcome thee!

May thy hands be daily strengthened
For the work thou hast to do,
Walking in the path of duty,
With the end of life in view!
May thy heart receive fresh courage,
For the task that lies before,
Strength for every time of weakness,
Till the toils of life are o'er.

Father, Mother, as you travel,
Hand in hand the rugged road,
Be it ours to cheer you onward,
Help you bear the weary load;
And with you pursue our journey,
Bound in ties of mutual love,
Side by side go pressing forward
To the "Better World" above.

AN ASPIRATION.

12th/31st/1871.

How swiftly Time flies in his onward career!
Filling so shortly the course of the year!
Leading us gently, but speedily on
Toward the evening of life, from the break of its dawn!
May God, in His mercy, look down from above,
And grant us this boon in His infinite love.
That we may press on through the darkness and gloom
That shroudeth our path to the door of the tomb,
With our hearts turned above, to the moutains that lie
In evergreen beauty and splendor on high!

THE DECADE.

1875.

Ten years ago today, Love!
They called us "husband, wife"!
And together we've turned the pages
Of the book of human life.

Together have shared the joys,
That over our way were shed,
Together have wept o'er blasted hopes,
Together have mourned the dead.

Together have borne the burdens
So hard to bear alone,
Whereby the golden chain of love
Has brighter, stronger grown.

But anon, the time will come, Love!
When life to death must yield,
When the reaper thrusts his sickle
In the world's great harvest field.

When on our failing vision
Comes the gleam of snowy sail,
And we cross the silent river,
With the boatman cold and pale!

There with joy beyond conception,
With a purer, holier love,
May we live the life eternal,
In the Father's house above!

GONE HOME.

1874.

Lines written on the death of Aunt Mary S. Barber, who died Tenth Month 27th, 1874, in her 70th year.

And she has gone! gone in the quiet season
When the leaves fall, and when the ripened grain
Fills up the garners, and the lovely haze
Of Indian Summer spreads o'er wood and plain.

Gone ere the chilling blasts of coming winter
O'er the bleak hills and naked forests blow;
Gone to that land of everlasting springtime,
Of light and beauty, unconceived below.

Gone to that rest, where sickness cannot seize her,
Where pain and grief distress the soul no more;
But fadeless youth, and purest life and beauty
Combine in glory on that radiant shore.

Oh, happy change! no cause, methinks, for weeping,
But rather for rejoicing, that the spirit,
So deeply tried, its rich reward is reaping
In the bright mansions which the blest inherit.

There, safe we trust, from all the storms and trials,
Which, erst beset the path her feet have trod;
Her soul redeemed from all her tribulations,
Rejoices in the glorious smile of God.

Perhaps the crown, which at the end awaits us,
Is brighter for the trials which we meet,
If only borne in patience; more refreshing
The perfect rest unto the weary feet.

Brighter by contrast, will be Zion's glory,
Her streets of gold, her walls of precious stone,
Purer the joy of the Eternal City,
Sweeter the music round the great white Throne!

Let us press forward, then, the ties that bind us
To earth, as years go by, are breaking fast,
But on the "Shining Shore", beyond the river,
The blessed ties of love forever last.

Let us look upward, and in every trial,
Anchor our hope and trust, alone in God,
Walking in simple faith and self-denial,
The narrow pathway the Redeemer trod.

Bearing His cross, relying on His promise,
Never to leave, nor to forsake His own,
Trusting to meet the dear ones taken from us,
In that bright world where parting is unknown.

OUR DUAL LIVES.

1875.

There are beautiful songs that we never sing,
 There are strains of music that die unheard,
That flash in the heart like the shining wing,
 Or the thrilling notes of a timid bird.

There are gems of thought that we safely keep
 Enshrined in our hearts, till their lustre gleams
Around our lives, like the silver sweep
 Of angel robes through our happy dreams.

There are glowing words that we do not speak,
 Freighted and filled with the soul's desire,
And the hues that burn on the blushing cheek
 Alone may tell of their hidden fire.

There are clouds of sadness that none may know,
 Saving the heart where the shadows fall;
There are waves of sorrow that overflow,
 Sometimes in secret, the hearts of all.

And away from the gaze of our fellow man,
 Are cherished hopes that we all conceal;
Beautiful visions our eyes may scan,
 But visions our lips may never reveal.

And deep in the heart where their fountains rise,
 Where the hidden springs of love have birth,
We keep close-veiled from human eyes,
 The sweetest and richest boon of earth.

Thus we are living our dual lives,—
 One that is outward and visible,
One in the heart's deep shrine survives,
 Strong, abiding, and hid from all.

"THE CITY OF THE LIVING."

1875.

Suggested by reading a poem with the same title, anonymously published in the New York Observer.

I read the story of that wondrous city
 Within whose portals wide,
Disease, and pain, and sorrow might not enter,
 "And never any died."

Where friendship's ties for aye remained unbroken,
 While years on years passed by;
Nor hearts were there with bitter anguish broken,
 Nor dim and tearful eye.

But working, willing, living on forever,
 Striving for "Power and pride",
Fearless that death would cross their threshold ever,
 Though "Graves grew green outside".

Yet strangely did its dwellers, of their pleasure,
 Grow weary, one by one,
Their souls unsatisfied with all the treasure
 That their long lives had won.

But no! not strange, for joy is born of sorrow,
 From weakness, strength shall spring,
The night begets the radiant tomorrow,
 And winter the bright spring.

Sweeter the sunshine when the storm is ended,
 Purer the mountain air,
And smiles and tears, on earth so strangely blended
 Make beauty's cheek more fair.

In the economy of life and being,
Bitter and sweet unite,
And pain may aid our faithless eyes, to seeing
In pleasure, new delight.

And when life's brief and fitful dream is over,
And the bright shore in view,
And gleams of light, beyond the mystic river,
The pearly gates shine through.

When pilgrims here, from every clime shall meet,
The cross of life laid down,
Sweeter will be the rest for weary feet,
Brighter the golden crown.

Ah, in THAT beauteous "City of the living",
No weariness will grow!
But joy more pure than that of earthly giving,
From founts eternal flow.

CONSOLATION.

There is a pleasure which the world
With all its wealth may not command;
A joy beyond our human grasp,
Bestowed by the All-Father's hand.

With all unholy passions stilled,
A heart at peace with all mankind,
The soul with quiet rapture filled,
Enjoys a "Sabbath of the mind".

Through love Divine, our human hearts
This boon of joy and peace may gain,
The while the weary body lies
Prostrate upon its couch of pain.

Where wasting sickness day by day
Weakens the ties that bind us here,
Till glancing o'er the upward way,
The joys of heaven seem drawing near;

As gently through the evening shades,
The hues of sunset softly play,
And sweetly blending with the gloom,
A promise of the coming day;

So sometimes on the trusting heart,
The dews of heavenly love distill,
And visions of the higher life,
With holy thoughts our bosoms fill:

And faith, that when the doubts and fears,
That haunt humanity are past,
And pilgrims from this "Vale of Tears",
Lay down their weary loads at last,

There, in the better world above,
Beyond the pearly gates of bliss,
We happily, on that bright shore,
May meet the friends we loved in this.

The above poem was written for Aunt Abby Allen, when in her last sickness; a most innocent and patient sufferer.

HEREAFTER.

1876.

"What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." John, XIII., 7.

Christian, when the storm clouds gather,
Dark and wild upon thy way,
And thy faithless heart is longing
For the glorious light of day;
Though thou canst not pierce the shadows
That around thy pathway lie,
If in faith thou journey forward,
They will vanish by and by.

Though the bitter cup of sorrow
To thy lips be often prest,
Yet as each returning morrow
Brings thee nearer to thy rest,
Though thou may not see the fountain,
Whence these streams of Marah flow,
Never let thy courage fail thee,
For "Thou shalt hereafter know."

If thy curious mind would fathom
That which God alone may know;
If thy troubled heart would query
Why the ways of God are so;
Why the losses and the crosses,
Which around thy pathway lie,
Be content, and meekly bear them,
In the hope that by and by,

When shall dawn the glorious morning
Of the bright eternal day,
When the mist, and cloud, and darkness,
That enwrap thee, pass away,
Thou shalt see the perfect beauty,
Of the plan of life and love,
In its fulness emanating
From the Father's throne above.

See and know the glad fruition,
From the labor and the tears
Spent within the Master's vineyard
Through the weary lapse of years;
Then press on the path of duty,
Though thou may not see below,
Why uncertainties surround thee,
Yet thou shalt hereafter know.

THE SMOKER'S DREAM.

1877.

A poetic rendering of an anecdote related in a public newspaper.

The preacher arose from his easy chair,
And carefully putting his pipe away,
He sought his couch, and after prayer,
His weary head on his pillow lay.

And soon he slept, and deep and long,
Until a dim and shadowy train
Of dreams, a dark mysterious throng,
Came trooping over his restless brain.

And the sleeper dreamed that the blast of fate,
By the great arch-angel's trump was given,
And his soul went up to the golden gate,
That stands at the corridors of Heaven.

And the Book of Life was opened there,
But the waiting angel sought in vain
Over its pages broad and fair,
For a single trace of the smoker's name!

And the spirit shuddered in deep dismay,
"For my name is surely there," he thought;
"For I love the Savior, and day by day
My hands in the Master's work have wrought."

The angel wept, and the pearly tears
Fell on the page he was bending o'er,
When lo! there dimly and faint appears
The name that the trembling spirit bore.

And the angel turned from the mighty book,
And a wondrous smile his face o'erspread,
As he bent on the dreamer a mingled look
Of love and pity, and softly said:

"The smoke of thy cherished pipe for years
Had gathered so heavy thy name about,
That naught but an angel's pitying tears,
And thy own contrition might wash it out."

The vision passed, and the sleeper awoke,
With a high resolve and a purpose strong,
To break forever the galling yoke,
And the cruel chain that had bound him long.

And for the years that were yet to be,
With a lighter heart and a clearer brain,
In the strength of a nobler manhood free,
He turned to the Master's work again.

EARLY CROWNED.

1877.

Lines on the death of Guli Purviance Williams.

"Leaves have their time to fall,
And flowers to wither at the north wind's breath,
And stars to set, but all,
Thou hast all seasons for thine own Oh death!"

—Hemans.

There are some with lives extending
O'er a weary lapse of years,
Through the lengthened journey blending
With their smiles, their many tears.
Toiling on life's path of duty,
With its crosses bowing down,
Till upon the Hills of Beauty
They receive the Heavenly crown.

Others, ere the dew and brightness
Of life's morning hours are gone,
Gain the robes of angel whiteness,
Put their glorious mantle on.
Early gathered in the fullness
Of the Heavenly Father's love,
Early crowned by His goodness
In the better world above.

One whose memory, like a blessing,
Rests upon my heart today,
From our loving and caressing
In the springtime went away:
Passed across the mystic river,
Won the everlasting rest,
And the crown that God would give her
In the Kingdom of the Blest.

And we weep in human blindness
At the loss we have sustained,
Heedless of the Master's kindness,
And the glory she hath gained;
In our weakness scarcely turning
Through our tears to look above,
Fondly for her presence yearning
With a strong undying love.

But I ponder o'er the sweetness
Of the spirit called away,
To its grand and full completeness,
In the world of endless day;
Till I listen in my dreaming
To a melody from far,
Sweet as angel music streaming
Through the pearly gates ajar!

And a feeling comes unspoken
Of a quiet faith and trust,
And although our joys are broken,
And our hopes are in the dust;
Though our skies are dark and gloomy
And the clouds obscure the sun,
Father! grant we still may murmur
"Not my will, but Thine be done"!

THE FIRE.

1877.

Fire! fire! and the fearful cry
On the air was loud and strong,
And the hills around gave back the sound,
And the terrible notes prolong;
Ringing,
Singing,
Echoing there,
That wild alarm on the wintry air!

Out in the street, with flying feet,
There was hurrying to and fro,
And the gloom of night was growing bright
With the fire-fiend's ruddy glow;
Lightening,
Brightening,
His fiery eye
Illumined the earth and the clouds on high.

Oh, fearful night! the weird fire-light,
On the dark and cloudy sky,
The roar and the din of the flames within,
Leaping and spreading on high;
Dashing,
Flashing,
Flying aloof,
From the basement floor to the attic roof.

How wildly there, in its own red glare,
As the wintry wind swept by
With whistle and moan, its gleaming shone,
Like a bonfire wild and high;
Till swaying,
Swinging,
Crashing it came
Downward to earth, amid sparkle and flame.

But morning came, and the maddening flame,
Its terrible work complete,
Had died away, and the ruins lay
Blackened and charred at our feet;
Lonely,
And only,
A ruinous heap,
A place for the stricken to linger and weep.

But never despair, though losses and care
May fill up our portion of sorrow,
The storms of to-day, when night wears away,
Give place to a brighter tomorrow;
Lighter,
And brighter,
The beautiful day
That dawns as the storm clouds are breaking away.

THE OLD YEAR.

1876.

Farewell, thou old Centennial year!
Ere from thy grave I turn away,
I fain would drop a silent tear,
And tune for thee a simple lay.

Thy work for right and truth should be
The burden of my humble song,
Thy victories of liberty,
Of law and justice over wrong.

Thy struggle against vice and crime,
Thy war against oppression's power,
In ringing notes from every clime
Should echo o'er thy dying hour.

For triumphs in the world of thought,
Where genius wins the meed of praise,
For intellectual progress wrought,
My voice, in just applause, I raise.

I fain would sing the glittering gems
Which science at thy feet hath strown,
The gleam of Art's own diadems,
By Labor set upon thy crown.

And future years shall fondly turn
From grateful hearts their thoughts to thee,
For still on memory's shrine shall burn
The bale-fires of thy Jubilee,

When every clime and mart of earth
Sent greetings to our western shore,
And friendship of a nobler birth,
Thy message to the nations bore.

But o'er my spirit comes a shade
Of sadness, and supreme regret,
That war with kindred wrongs arrayed,
And crime and murder flourish yet.

That Bacchus still asserts his reign,
And fills too oft the midnight bowl,
Till madness fires the inebriate brain,
And lust and crime destroy the soul.

God grant that soon the day may come
When tyranny and wrong shall cease,
When cannon roar, and roll of drum
Shall die away in songs of peace.

When the long catalog of crime
No more shall mar creation's page,
But Peace and Right in every clime
Live and increase from age to age.

THE SHADOW.

1878.

Grief had hung its sable curtain
Like a cloud upon my way,
And upon my life a shadow,
Dark and nameless, haunting lay.
Sad the present seemed, and cheerless,
And the web of future years
Fancy wove in sombre colors,
With the warp and woof of tears.

And my soul was bowed in sorrow,
For the bitterness and woe
Of my heart were upward welling
In a constant overflow.
Till the days were days of darkness,
And the night scarce brought relief
To my spirit overburdened
With its plenitude of grief!

And I wrestled in my anguish,
Like the patriarch who strove
With the angel at the waters,
For his blessing and his love;
Till the chastened soul ascended
On the wings of fervent prayer,
That the shadow might be lifted,
And the sunlight gather there.

Day by day the aspirations
Of a stricken soul went up
To the Great White Throne of mercy,
That if possible this cup
Filled at Marah's bitter fountains
From my lips might pass away,
And the clouds and gloom be driven
From about my humble way.

But the dark and brooding shadow
Still upon my way was spread,
Still the bitter cup before me,
Still the dark cloud overhead!
But as in the hush of evening
Sweetly sounds the vesper bell,
So a whisper, soft and gentle,
On my weary spirit fell.

"Child! the prayers and intercessions
Of thy soul are known on high,
And the Father watcheth o'er thee
Still with His Omniscient eye!
Trust His grace, it is sufficient!
All His gifts and blessings own!
Heaven's eternal joy, before thee,
Bear the cross, and wear the crown!"

And a sense of rest and quiet
Gently o'er my spirit stole,
Peace, the white-winged angel, hovered
Brooding, dove-like, o'er my soul.
And I thank the blessed Master
For the answer He hath sent,
And I strive, His grace enabling,
With my lot to be content.

And although the shadow lingers,
On His promise still I stand,
Take the bitter cup as mingled
By the great All-Father's hand!
And as patiently I drink it.
With my soul submissive bowed,
Light is breaking through the shadow,
And the rainbow spans the cloud!

And the wing of Faith, once drooping,
Soiled and trailing in the dust,
Gathered strength, and mounting upward
To a quiet hope and trust,
Points beyond life's sunset portals,
To the hills by angels trod,
Where, nor clouds, nor shadows gather
In the Kingdom of our God.

A HARVEST HYMN.

1878.

Almighty God! from out whose hand
Our blessings, countless as the sand
Upon the ocean's sounding shore,
Fall 'round our pathway evermore!
Let songs of praise our lips employ
For all Thy gifts which we enjoy.

These glorious summer days have brought
Another harvest, richly fraught
With all the stores a fertile soil
Yields in reward for honest toil,
Till ripening fruit, and golden grain
Crown sunny slope, and smiling plain.

Teach us, Oh Father! more to see
How all our blessings come from Thee!
How wealth and plenty o'er the land,
Are mercies from Thy open hand;
How all the "circle of events"
Is governed by Thy Providence.

The teeming earth is Thine, we see,
And all its fullness comes from Thee!
Beneath Thy care, the season yields
Its seed time and its harvest fields,
 The bleating flocks, and lowing kine,
 The herds on all the hills are Thine!

For all Thy blessings, Holy One!
We thank Thee! and for time to come
Invoke Thy guardianship Divine,
Until the world's great harvest time,
 Then may we, free from tares of sin,
 As golden sheaves be gathered in!

IN MEMORIAM.

Semira S. Edgerton, to whose memory the following lines are inscribed with tears, departed this life suddenly, Ninth Month 11, 1878, aged thirty-four years, four months and six days. Her eminently kind and social nature had endeared her to a large circle of relatives and friends, but brightest around her own fire-side, and in the bosom of her own family, shone forth the virtues which adorned her character, illuminating the whole atmosphere of home, making it, for herself and those to whom her life was devoted, the dearest spot on earth.

But God has seen meet, in His providence, to call her home unto Himself, and we desire to bow humbly to His will. May He have regard to the sighs and tears of the motherless and afflicted!

She was buried at Friend's grave-yard, near Coal Creek, Iowa, Ninth Month 13th, 1878. Her grave is the second from the south, in the sixth row from the east.

To the Departed.

Adieu sweet wife! bowed down with grief,
Above thy new-made grave I bend,
And wet with tears the dust that lies
Above my best and dearest friend.

In vain for me these autumn days
Adorn the earth with tints of bloom,
While o'er my stricken spirit broods
A shadow deep as winter's gloom.

For sorrow like a sable pall,
Hangs o'er the home that thou hast left,
And blinding tears are wont to fall
From mourning ones, of thee bereft.

But as I weep o'er buried hopes,
With tears which I may not restrain,
A vision, beautiful and bright,
Dawns gently on my aching brain.

A glimpse of beauty, far away
In that bright city of the blest,
Where toil-worn feet no longer stray,
And weary souls forever rest.

And there before the throne of God,
With spotless robes and seraph wings,
Thy hand attunes a golden harp,
Thy voice with angel sweetness sings.

Thy feet no longer bruised and worn
And weary, tread the starry ways
And shining pathways, hand in hand
With those, the loved of other days.

God grant us faith to look above!
And see the glory thou hast won!
And through our sighs and tears to breathe
From bleeding hearts "Thy will be done!"

And may He to His poor shorn lambs
Temper the stormy wind of life,
Keep us and lead us safely home
Unto Himself and thee, dear wife!

Ninth Month 23rd, 1878.

MY ANGEL WIFE.

I have a wife, an angel wife!
In a realm of joy untold,
Where angels stand in the Beautiful Land,
Striking their harps of gold.

And the songs they sing, the notes that ring
From their harp-strings, sweet and clear,
Float down from far, through the gates ajar,
Till their music I almost hear.

And I almost seem to catch the gleam
Of their beautiful robes of white,
As to and fro on their wings of snow,
They glance through the fields of light.

And resting there, from the toil and care,
And the weariness of life,
Where loved ones meet in the golden street,
There dwelleth my angel wife!

In that beautiful land at God's right hand,
Where the founts of healing flow,
No sickness there, for the soul to bear,
Nor weariness, pain, nor woe.

Nor bitter tears, nor haunting fears,
Besetting her spirit now,
But her eyes are bright with Heaven's own light,
And its glory crowns her brow.

Oh, beautiful one! when time is done,
Beyond death's starless night,
In a higher life, my angel wife,
May our spirits reunite!

Ninth Month 24th, 1878.

MY BIRTHDAY.

And I am thirty-five! how swift
The "flood of years" is rolling by!
And with a strong resistless sweep,
As of a river broad and deep,
It bears us toward eternity!

Mid-way of life's on-going tide,
My barque rides restlessly today;
Around me falls the welcome light
Of heaven; before me hid from sight,
The cloud-lands of the future lay.

Behind me stretches far away,
A panorama rich and vast,
As through the vista of the years,
I see the smiles, and hopes, and fears
The lights and shadows of the past.

The green and fairy isles of youth,
Were slowly passed, the sunny years,
When life was new, and hearts were light
And limbs were free, and eyes were bright,
Undimmed by sorrow and by tears.

And memory loves to linger still,
Where on the ever-widening stream,
The spring of manhood's early prime,
And love's perennial summer-time
Commingle in one happy dream.

And that sweet friend, who at my side
 Dared every breaker's stormy crest
A dozen years, then furled her sail,
And with the "boatman cold and pale",
 Entered the haven of her rest.

Thus ever ebbing with the tide,
 Our individual lives float on,
And those who sail with us today,
May drift tomorrow, far away,
 Beyond the curtains of the dawn

And swifter speeds my barque along,
 As years in swift succession come,
And soon the land-ward-blowing gale
Will fan my cheek and swell my sail,
 And waft me quickly to my home.

Oh, Heavenly Pilot! take the helm!
 And guide me safely evermore,
Amid the dangers of my way,
Until my pilgrim boat shall lay
 At anchor on the Shining Shore.

Seventh Month 12th, 1880.

NEW YEARS EVE MUSINGS.

Twelfth Month 31st, 1878.

Alone within my quiet room
I while the lonely hours away
With thoughts of her, around whose tomb
Sweet halos of remembrance play:
Sweet recollections of the time
Now shrouded in the dreamy past,
When her fond love was wholly mine,—
A treasure, all too bright to last!

When at my side, for woe or weal,
Sharing alike my hopes and fears,
In pain and sickness, balm to heal,
Weeping at all my bitter tears!—
Alas! poor bleeding heart! in vain
Must be thy yearning wild and strong!
The music of her voice again
No more shall sweep thy chords along.

For as we trod the rugged road
Of life and duty, hand in hand,
Helping to bear each-other's load,
With eyes upon the "Better Land",
Her gentle hand was snatched from mine,
And angels bore her from my sight
To that bright world, where sing and shine
The saints of God in robes of white.

And there, methinks within the gates
Of pearl, where angels prostrate fall,
My angel wife expectant waits,
Or leaning o'er the jasper wall
Beckons her loved ones to that land,
Where death and parting are no more,
Where toil-worn feet all rested stand
With her upon that radiant shore.

THE GRAVE IN THE WEST.

1879.

Blow gently, ye winds of the prairies!
Fan softly one grave in the West!
Kiss the cheeks of the sweet floral fairies
Abloom by the place of her rest!

And sparkle ye dews of the morning!
On fragrant wild violet and rose!
In their summer-time glory adorning
The spot where her ashes repose.

Fall softly, ye rain drops, and lightly!
On that grave where no more I may weep!
And ye stars shining solemnly, nightly
Your vigils above it may keep!

And thither your rapid flight winging,
Sweet minstrels of forest and dell!
There over her lone pillow singing
To the being who loved you so well!

Where grasses and flowerets are springing,
There over the dust of the dead,
The music of Nature is ringing,
And her wild benedictions are said.

Oh, grave in the West! when recalling
The joys and the hopes left with thee!
The tears of my anguish are falling,
And my heart heaves and moans like the sea.

And lonely, and sad, and repining,
I weep o'er the way I must tread,
Yet still there's a bright "silver lining"
To the clouds that hang over my head.

For the eyes of my sad spirit greeting,
Sweet visions of beauty arise,
And Hope fondly points to a meeting,
A reunion of love in the skies.

Cheer up then my soul! nor misgiving,
Nor doubt, nor despair must be thine!
For God and humanity living
Till a grave in the valley be mine.

MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME.

1879.

Home of my childhood! once again
I greet thy old time-honored walls,
I sit beneath thy orchard trees,
And on my ears the hum of bees,
As in my early boyhood falls.

I wander in the pleasant shade
Of grand old maples in the grove,
And the sweet southern breezes play
Among the leafy boughs today,
The notes my childhood learned to love.

Again I drink the cooling draughts,
That from the rocky hillside flow;
But mirrored on the crystal streams,
How changed the stooping figure seems,
Since drinking thirty years ago.

Oh, time and change, alas, alas!
How sadly on my spirit falls
 Your heavy hand, as from the tears,
 And smiles, and hopes of bygone years,
The voice of memory calls.

The happy group that gathered here,
At board and hearth, in years gone by,
 Is parted now, and scattered wide;
 In prairie home, by mountain side,
Its broken fragments lie.

And passing to their quiet rest
In the eternal morning's dawn,
 A father with his silvered hair,
 A mother with her loving care,
Brothers and sisters, too, have gone.

And one more dear than all to me,
Whom here I learned to trust and love,
 Was all my own a few brief years,
 Then from a life of hopes and fears,
Passed into bliss above!

Called in the noon of womanhood,
From fond and loving hearts away;
 Long may her hallowed influence rest,
 As dews distill on Hermon's crest,
Upon my lonely way.

A few more years! I too shall pass
Across the river dark and wide;
 God grant that in the world to come,
 The loved ones of my heart and home
May gather at my side.

THE VISION.

1879.

Oh! there are moments when the tide
 Of feeling rises uncontrolled,
When o'er the heart, however brave,
The sweep of its resistless wave
 Like ocean's angry surge is rolled!

Moments, when naught may intervene
 To stay the flood of falling tears,
As from the dark mysterious sea,
And haunted isles of memory,
 Float by, the scenes of other years.

Scenes that have power to stir the soul
 Down to its centre still and deep,
Striking its rich and trembling keys,
Until their solemn harmonies
 Float o'er us in their outward sweep.

Oh! scenes and joys of other years,
 Gone down into the echoing past;
Over my restless brain tonight
Are visions thronging, dark and bright,
 A panorama rich and vast;

But brightest, foremost of the train,
 One lovely presence, still I find,
With beaming eye and breathing lip,
And all the sweet companionship,
 And glory of her heart and mind.

And with her gentle hand in mine,
 Her sacred influence o'er me thrown,
Again I feel her loving care,
Again I breathe the social air,
 The holy atmosphere of home!

But sweetest dreams will soonest fade,
 As from the sky the richest stains,
So passes from my ravished sense
The vision, but still more intense
 The yearning of my heart remains.

But Love will dream, and Hope will trust
 That in the glorious morning's dawn,
When on the everlasting hills,
The tears of anguish, and the ills
 Of mortal life are lost and gone.

That there in glory we may meet
 The "loved and lost" of other years,
Upon the bright eternal shore,
Where parting smites the soul no more,
 And dried are all our bitter tears.

THE LAND OF DREAMS.

1879.

Oh, dim and shadowy Dreamland!
 What mysteries are thine?
What strange and wild illusions
 Along thy borders shine!

What dark and haunting shadows
 Along thy valleys glide!
What gleams of heavenly glory
 Lie on thy mountain side!

Scenes of ethereal beauty
Lie hid thy dells among,
And on our ears fall sweetly
Snatches of angel song.

And lips of "loved and lost" ones
That speak on earth no more,
Here breathe in love their blessings
Upon us, as of yore.

And our hearts in rapture tremble
At their accents soft and low,
Floating downward through the stillness
From the shades of long ago.

And we see their smiling faces,
And their loving eyes of light
Melting through the clouds above us,
Filling us with strange delight.

Sweeping o'er our silent heart-strings,
Waking joys that buried lay
With the loved ones who are sleeping
Where the cypress shadows play.

Joys which shed a mournful sweetness
O'er our busy waking hours,
Bringing back the forms and faces
Of those darling ones of ours,

Who no more on earth can meet us,
Save in memory and in dreams,
Who have passed beyond the river
Where the Golden City gleams.

THANKSGIVING.

1880.

Almighty Father! wilt thou hear
The hymns of gratitude and praise,
Ascending from our myriad homes?—
The tribute that the Nation pays,

To Thee whose right supreme it is
To mold by Thy omnipotence,
The eternal destinies of life,
The changing circle of events.

For all the blessings manifold,
Which, falling from Thy open hand,
Have borne the rich and precious boon
Of peace and plenty through the land.

For all the wealth of golden grain
That crowned the summer's sunny brow,
The autumn's fields of ripened corn,
The fruitage of the orchard bough;

The verdure of the smiling plain,
Where lowing cattle range at will,
The happy homes and bursting barns,
The bleating flocks upon the hill;

The bench and forge, where men of toil
By thrift and industry arrayed,
Are urging through its varied course
The rich and rapid stream of trade.

For all of these, aye more than this—
Even for the very life we live—
Our food and sleep, the air we breathe,
Are blessings Thou alone can give.

We only by thy bounty claim
The life and wealth that nature fills,
For Thine are all the flocks and herds—
"The cattle on a thousand hills".

Help us, still more to recognize
Thy over-ruling Providence,
To see and own Thy guiding hand,
Through every changing circumstance.

Give us, Oh Father! thankful hearts
Thy power to own, Thy love to prize,
So from our souls a living hymn
Of pure thanksgiving may arise.

HEART GUESTS.

1880.

Night has thrown her trailing garments
O'er the busy world again,
Silencing the din and murmur
In the busy haunts of men.

Stilling in the street the trampling,
As the twilight shadows fade,
Quieting the fevered beating
Of the throbbing pulse of trade.

Bringing sleep to chase the shadows
From the brow of care away,
Rest to hands and hearts aweary
With the labors of the day.

And within my chamber sitting,
 Listening to the falling rain,
As it beats upon the shingles,
 And against the window pane;

Silently there steal around me
 Beaming faces, tender eyes,
And my Heart Guests are beside me,
 Whose enduring love I prize.

Friends from far and near surround me,
 Loving eyes gaze in my own,
Till I almost hear the music
 Of each sweet familiar tone.

At my knees the children gather,
 And their arms about me twine,
And beneath their golden ringlets
 Merry eyes of azure shine.

But as memory's busy finger
 Points to scenes of other years,
Swells my heart with deep emotion,
 And my eyes are dim with tears.

For beside me sits a loved one
 Dearest of them all to me,
With her large sweet eyes upon me,
 And her winning smile I see,

Just as in the days departed,
 Ere she crossed the mystic wave;—
Now, alas! the grass is growing
 Fresh and green upon her grave.

And my heart responsive trembles
As her voice in blessing falls
Sweetly through the echoing portals,
Of the soul's mysterious halls.

Thus among my loving heart guests,
Swift the moments pass away,
In a feast of mental pleasure—
Sweetest hours of all the day!

But the warning notes are ringing,
From the clock upon the wall,
And I seek my couch of slumber,
With a kind adieu to all.

But ere sleep my eyelids touches,
From a grateful heart I pray
"May the Father guide you safely
In life's rough and toilsome way.

"And may those whose shining garments
Trail beside Life's crystal streams,
Oft in memory sit beside me,
Often visit me in dreams."

OLD YEAR MEMORIES.

1880.

The year is growing old, dear friend!
The year is growing old.
The snow is on the silent hills,
The air is crisp and cold;
The day is bright, and brief, and cold!

I see the sun go grandly down,
The stars come out on high,
And the new moon, a thread of light,
Upon the western sky
Hang timid, trembling in the sky.

And as I sit beside the fire,
And watch its cheerful glow,
My heart is busy with the scenes
And friends of long ago,
Living and dead, of long ago.

As one by one, the stars steal out
To deck the winter sky,
So memory summons those I loved
In years long since gone by
Dear friend! in years long since gone by.

I almost hear the merry laugh,
And see the sparkling eyes,
And catch the old, familiar tones
Of those I fondly prize;
Ah yes! of friends I fondly prize.

I see again our native hills
O'er which the blue skies bend,
And seem again to tread their slopes
With thee! my gentle friend;
With thee, my tried and trusted friend!

But ah! the rugged paths of life
 Have led where mountains rise,
And wearily, with bleeding feet,
 And under low'ring skies
We go, sometimes what gloomy skies!

But mingled with the cloud and storm,
 God's blessed sunshine falls
Around us, and the angel Hope
 From heights above us calls—
To brighter, higher summits, calls!

The year is growing old, dear friend!
 And the brief winter day
Of life full soon will bring the snow,
 And touch our locks with gray;
Our brows with care, our locks with gray.

God grant that all the coming years
 Courage and strength may lend,
To meet the toil and reach the goal
 Where human life shall end,
And life Divine begin, dear friend!

"WHAT INSPIRES."

A satire on a poem (?) with the same title, appearing in "The Independent Register", along about 1880.

What does inspire the lofty thoughts,
 The burning, swelling words of song?
Which with harmonic cadence float
 The heart's vibrating chords along?

What may inspire the ardent zeal
 That burns the poet"s midnight oil?
What nerves his heart to struggle on
 Through years of unrequited toil?

Can "sunshine" or "dark nights" induce
The nine to quit their fabled streams
Of Myth?—Better the day for **toil,**
Better the night for **sleep** and **dreams!**

Better the "Editorial page"
To tell us who has sold or bought,
Who's married, dead, or left the town,
Than to "inspire" poetic thought!

And tell us not that "flattery's" voice
"Inspires to song," till bubbling o'er
With poetry, its echoes wake
"Where song had never been before".

'Tis true that sorrow's heavy hand
May strike upon the inner keys
Of being, waking at the touch
Their fullest, sweetest harmonies.

But **only** when within the heart
Lies hidden and **inborn** the stream
Of Poesy, which, murmuring there,
Dwells with us, as a happy dream;

Until strong feeling strikes the soul,
Then rises upward at the shock,
As gushed beneath the prophet's blow,
The water from the smitten rock.

THE DEATH OF THE YEAR.

1880.

The twilight glow has faded,
And the dusky shadows fall,
And their mantle wraps the busy world
In the darkness, like a pall

And the winds are sadly sighing,
And the night is dark and drear,
And the tears of the clouds are falling
On the death-bed of the year.

Oh, the dying year! how swiftly
The seasons come and go,
To the rhythm of the "Flood of Years,"
In its never ceasing flow.

The springtime came with south winds,
And beautiful birds and flowers,
Filling with fragrance and music,
The breath of the balmy hours.

And summer, with rain and sunshine,
And blessing of ripened grain,
Decked, like a garden of beauty,
Hillside and valley and plain.

And autumn with bursting garners,
And the orchard's lavish stores,
And forests, dyed with the glories
Of the sunset's golden doors.

But all these passed; the children
Of the stricken year are dead,
And only the winter watches
Beside his dying bed.

And out in the wind and darkness,
In the dome of the midnight skies,
With icy hand in the New Year's palm,
Moaning, the old year dies!

MOONLIGHT MUSINGS.

1880.

Day, declining from the hill-tops,
Through the sunset gates has gone,
And the summer night comes softly,
With her sable garments on.

And the curtain of the twilight,
Folding closely 'round the hills,
Hushes Nature's myriad voices,
And the din of business stills.

And the moon in modest splendor
Rises in the eastern sky,
Touching with her brush of silver
All the clouds that 'round her lie.

Dallying with their fleecy curtains,
Weaving them with threads of light
In a veil of gorgeous beauty,
On the dusky brow of night.

Filling all the skies with glory,
Till her rich and mellow haze
Hides the starry lamps of heaven
In her own effulgent rays.

Clothing all the quiet landscape
With the mantle of her beams,
Soft as trailing spirit-garments,
In the mystic land of dreams.

Till within her soft embraces
Nature's self seems lulled to rest,
While the kisses of the moonbeams
On her blushing cheek are prest.

And as musing on the splendor
Of the scene that 'round me lies,
Gazing on this hour of beauty,
Silent, with enraptured eyes,

I am thinking how the lovelight
Of the heart around us plays,
Painting e'en the clouds above us
With the pencil of its rays.

Like the silver moonbeams filling
All our little world with light,
Shining even through the shadows
Of misfortune's gloomy night.

Resting gently, like a halo
On the weary brow of care,
Till beneath its magic touching,
Joy and beauty gather there.

And its sweet and holy influence
Like the moonlight on the lea
Lends a brighter charm to being,
From our grosser nature free.

And our spirits seem uplifted
Toward the Better World above,
Where amid its scenes of beauty
Shines the light of **perfect love.**

MESSAGE TO THE DEAD.

1880.

Dear Wife! again the balmy spring
With fragrant breath of golden hours,
Calls forth the wild bird's carolling,
And wakes to life the lovely flowers;

And weaves about thy western tomb
A gorgeous robe of vernal life,
Loading the zephyrs with perfume
That breathe around thy grave, Dear Wife!

And though a second time the snows
Of winter wrapped that mound of earth,
And flowers above thy deep repose
A second time have had their birth;

Yet as my lonely footsteps press
These woodland paths so far away,
The tears which I may not repress,
Bedew my pensive eyes today.

For mingling in the busy mart
Of trade, or when the night has stilled
Her myriad tongues, within my heart
An aching void remains unfilled.

And my sad spirit turns to thee,
Who loved so tenderly and long,
With all its deep intensity
Of yearning, passionate and strong.

Help me, Oh Father! still to bear,
In meek submission to Thy will,
My load of loneliness and care
And sorrow, that oppresses still.

In mercy grant, or soon or late,
The fragments of our household band,
Safely within the Pearly Gate
United evermore may stand.

THE SURPRISE.

1880.

I had lingered in the school room,
 Whence the boys and girls had gone,
Till the sun in glory setting
 Brought the twilight shadows on.

And the wind was sadly moaning
 In the naked trees without,
And upon the quiet campus,
 Tossed the withered leaves about.

And upon my heart a shadow,
 Sad and sombre, seemed to fall,
Like the shades that deeper gathered
 On the lonely school-room wall.

For the thought was full of sadness,
 That in each accustomed place,
I, no more should meet in gladness,
 Beaming eye, and smiling face.

So with heart depressed and lonely,
 Filled with memories sad and sweet,
Slow I locked the dear old school-house,
 Homeward turned my weary feet.

And as there I sat and pondered
 O'er the doings of the day,
Asking of the misty future,
 What behind its curtain lay,

Suddenly the door swung open,
 Smiling faces, merry eyes,
Dancing forms again surround me
 In a glad, complete surprise.

And their loving words and actions
 Chased my gloomy thoughts away,
Like the twilight veil dissolving
 In the sunlight of the day.

As a city left unguarded,
 In the midnight's lonely hour,
Falls an easy prey to battle,
 And the grim besieger's power,

So ye merry, loving children,
 With your hearts so true and warm,
Planned to capture me by kindness!
 Thought to carry me by storm!

But as prisoners I shall hold you,
 Nor shall let you hence depart,
Guard you safely and forever
 In the Bastile of my heart.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS—To My Pupils. 1880.

With mingled feelings of regret and joy,
I stand before you at the evening time.
Regret, that we must part, and that the ties
Which bound us here together must be broken,
And these dear walls, which through the winter time
Resounded to the sprightly tread, the laugh,
The recitation, will be desolate.
Joy, that I now lay down the burden
Of responsibility, long borne,
By striving, in my humble way,
To guide your feet in wisdom's paths aright.
And though my hands were weak, and, oftentimes,
I failed to reach the goal of my desire,
Yet I have striven therefor, and clinging
To consciousness of this, I ask excuse
From what I failed to do, trusting
That unto me, as, unto her who sat
And bathed the Savior's feet, the welcome
Words may come, "She hath done what she could".

To you, my pupils, for the kindness shown
By you, to me, and to each other, I,
From a full heart, would fain return my thanks.
And may you in the coming harvest time
Reap your full measure of its sweetest fruits.
Oh! may you, may we all, with jealous care
Guard every action, for the seed we sow
Will surely reproduce itself in kind.
No law which God has fixed in the domain
Of nature, is more potent than His word,
That "as we sow, so shall we also reap."

If we
To please our own self-will, indulge in that
Which conscience, or the law of kindness
Would forbid, we scatter seed, from which
E'en in this life, we will not fail to reap. The oak
Upon the hills, whose giant arms are spread
Abroad to heaven, sprang from an acorn
Like those that now bestud its branches.
The golden grain, which, from the reaper's hand,
Falls in the summer sun-light, is the true
And faithful counterpart of that which fell
Upon the summer fallow, and sprang up
Beneath the autumn rains; and so through all
The various forms of nature and of life.

Should sloth, or love of ease, delay our hand,
Now in the springtime of our lives, be sure
That in the same proportion, will a mind
Unfurnished, and a barren age be ours!
So let us strive with noble zeal to reach,
And to aspire beyond the lower walks
Of life; to emulate the wise and good
Whose bright examples shine along our way.

Let us press forward! As time passes on,
Age, by a dire necessity, resigns
The place of honor and of power alike;
And on this generation will depend
Our country's future, when a few more years
Have rolled away, breaking their noiseless
Waves, upon the boundaries of Eternity.

And if, in after years you may be called
To the front ranks, to stand above your fellows
And fill the places of the wise and good!
Oh! may the lessons I have taught you here
Help to prepare you for the mighty trust;
And I, meanwhile will hope and pray, my
Work was not in vain, and if it lead you
Upward to a higher sphere, a plane
Of more exalted character, from which
You may look down upon the world
Beneath you, and upward to the walls
And golden gates of Heaven, then I
Will be content, and humbly trust
And hope that in the mighty harvest
Of the world, when Death has reaped
The fields and gathered in the sheaves;
Beyond the jasper walls and pearly gates,
Our spirit eyes may greet each other
And the loved ones who have gone before,
To mingle in the peace and joy of Heaven!

THE ANGEL OF SPRINGTIME.

1881.

Welcome, Angel of the Springtime!
Of the bright and golden hours,
Thrilling to the wild-bird's carol,
Fragrant with the breath of flowers.

Bright the beauty thou art flinging
In the verdant lap of May,
As the glorious sunshine lends thee
All its richest tints today,

Gleaming over hill and forest,
Where the young leaves dance and play,
O'er the meadow where the brooklet
Leaps and murmurs on its way.

Gladly at thy call I wander
From the noisy haunts of men,
And in leaf, and bud, and blossom
See thy smiling face again.

Listen to thy notes of music,
Falling gently on my ear,
Like a gracious benediction,
Through the dreamy atmosphere.

But I listen with emotion,
For I think of her whose eyes
Always kindled at thy beauties,
Who beneath the western skies

Drooped and died, and now is sleeping
Where thy sweetest blossoms wave;
Thrice thy gentle hand has strewn them
Bright and fresh above her grave.

Deck it still, Oh, lovely springtime!
With the flowers she loved so well,
Though beyond the mystic portal,
Where her soul has gone to dwell,

Richer, rarer flowers are blooming,
Sweeter songs are on the air,
Purer joys than thine surround her,
In her home of glory there.

THE PUGNACIOUS LOVER.

1881.

'Tis an old and honored saying,
"Truth is stranger far than fiction,"
And the story I shall tell you
Goes to prove the bold assertion;
Goes to prove that in the real
Lives we live, as in the ideal
Of the author's burning fancy,
There are startling acts and dramas,
On the stage, that pass before us,
With the coloring of romance,
With the semblance of a fiction.

Now the hero of my story
Is a man of erudition,
Versed in lore of school and college,
In the laws and ways of science,
In the laws and ways of nations:
And withal he is a namesake
Of the "Father of his Country":
And within the halls of learning
Of our quiet little village,
Where the boys and girls were gathered
Day by day, throughout the winter,
He had shaped the pliant branches
Of the "Olive plants" around him.
And beside the molding, bending,
Of the infant minds about him,
There was one, another teacher,
Came to look, with smile approving,

Upon every word and action
Of this artful man of learning,
Loved him for—mayhap his talents,
Or his handsome face, that beaming
On her sweet and girlish fancy,
Seemed to her the bright ideal
Of a gentle, manly lover—
Loved him, though she knew that somewhere
Lived the sad wreck of a woman,
Whom this wily, wise Professor,
Once had vowed to love and cherish.

But the father of the maiden
Was displeased to have his daughter
Courted by a man, already
Bound by law unto another:
But the lovers passed unheeding
All the interdicts paternal,
All the threats and admonitions,
All the pleading and commanding;
For herein they saw the vision
Of a wild romantic courtship,
Of a rare and tragic amour!

So to meet the expectations
Of his own disordered fancies,
And to make himself a hero (?)
In the eyes of all who knew him,
Like some ancient knight or yeoman
In the tales of feudal ages.
As the hero of my story
Met, one day, upon the street side,
With his sweetheart and her father,
All the gallantry and courage (?)
Of the pugilistic lover

Burned within him, and essaying
To secure his priceless treasure,
(With the treasure which she carried
In her purse of Russia leather),
He incurred the free expression
Of her father's strong objections;
Words and blows were freely bandied,
By the hands and tongues so lately
Leading, guiding in the school-room!

Indecisive was the battle,
Both were wounded, but the maiden
Was not captured, and returning
To her home was closely guarded,
Lest her gallant (?) irate lover
Steal her from the roof paternal.

Hastily I pass the lessons,
Which such street affrays should teach us,
To the sequel of my story,
Telling how the shrewd Professor
Gains the ear of legal Justice (?)
And from underneath the shadow
Of symbolic sword and balance,
Sends her messenger, who coming,
Armed with the majestic weapon
Of a writ of habeas corpus,
Brings the timid, blushing maiden
To the bar, where legal wisdom (?)
Gives her to the pleased Professor.

Thus my story ends; I pause not
At its close, to write a moral,
Each may draw his own conclusions,
Weigh their acts, and estimate their
Conduct for himself, as I do!!

THE SNOW-FALL.

1881.

Gently falls the fleecy snow,
Softly as the lapse of time,
 But the music that it makes,
 And the feeling it awakes,
Weave themselves in humble rhyme.

Music which the heart may feel,
Though the ear may scarcely know;
 As a gentle interlude
 To the storm notes, wild and rude,
Which the winds of winter blow.

Softly fall, ye feathery flakes!
Spread the mantle of the snow
 Over Nature in her sleep,
 And her hidden treasures keep
Till the gentle south-winds blow.

Till the icy bonds are loosed
From the singing brooks again,
 And rejoicing to be free,
 Dancing downward to the sea,
As they sing their glad refrain.

Spread your robe of spotless white,
Decked with jewels of the frost,
 O'er the low and narrow beds,
 Where were laid the weary heads
Of our dearly loved and lost.

In a few more years, we, too,
In the grave shall silent lie;
 And the robe of snow be spread
 O'er the dwellings of the dead,
And the winter wind be high,

But 'twill matter not to us,
For beyond the gloom and shade
 Of the tomb shall ever be
 Joyous spring eternally;
Glories that shall never fade.

Gently fall, ye crystal flakes!
Gently fall, ye passing years!
 Clothe us softly for our rest,
 As the sun sinks in the west,
And the night of death appears.

THE NATION'S SUSPENSE.

1881.

Written during the days of suspense, following the shooting of President Garfield.

All the thrilling wires were trembling
With their messages of grief,
Bearing to the startled millions
Tidings of their prostrate chief;
Till from ocean unto ocean,
Flashing with the lightning's speed,
Every hamlet, every hearth-stone
Heard the foul assassin's deed.

'And as poised upon the balance
Hangs the chance for life or death,
Fifty million souls are waiting,
Listening with abated breath!
Men of strength and courage falter,
Women weep and children cry,
And from many a household altar
Fervent prayers ascend on high!

From ten thousand sanctuaries,
With their throngs in suppliance bent,
Floats to God the aspiration,
"Save our noble President!"—
Ne'er suspense so deep and painful
Hovered in the shuddering air,
Ne'er before the listening heavens
Heard such universal prayer!

'Mid the fertile fields and valleys
Of his own fair native state,
On the wild hills of New England,
Tearful, prayerful thousands wait;
And the Mississippi heaving
Seaward his resistless tide,
Hears a murmur of bewailing
From his prairies wild and wide.

And beyond the rocky summits
 Of the white Sierra's crest,
Rich in sympathy and pity
 Beats the strong pulse of the West;
Blending with their mountain echoes
 To the Nation's cry of pain,
Swells the calm Pacific's chorus,
 As a deeply sad refrain!

From the lovely sun-kissed valleys,
 From palmetto-shaded homes
Of the South, a thrilling message,
 Full of love and pity comes;
For the great heart of the Nation,
 By its nobler instincts bound,
With the suffering of its chieftain
 Beats in sympathy profound.

Oh, the sympathy of sorrow!
 Born of Charity and Love!
Lifting up our better nature
 All our grosser selves above!
Making manhood seem more Christ-like,
 Through the ministries it brings,
Gliding o'er us like the shadow
 Of an angel's silent wings.

Blending with our human nature
 Thoughts and feelings half Divine,
As within their worldly setting
 Precious gems of kindness shine;
And our kindred ties grow stronger,
 As our hopes and prayers are blent,
In the overshadowing sorrow,
 Round our wounded President!

THE POOR POET'S DREAM.

1881.

The poet sat in his workshop,
Back from the busy street,
Where all day long he had listened
To the tread of passing feet;
Where all day long he had labored,
With skillful hands and strong,
Till the sun was grandly setting,
And the evening shades grew long.

For although his brain was busy
With the rhythmic flow of song;
And his touch could wake wild harmonies,
Life's sounding chords among;
Yet the daily need of labor,
For the daily need of bread,
Called for the earnest efforts
Of hand, and heart, and head.

So from dawn of the rosy morning,
Till sunset, he had wrought,
And now, at eve his heart was filled
With rich poetic thought;
And visions, sweet and beautiful,
Glimmered before his eyes,
But veiled in shrouds, like fleecy clouds
Sailing o'er moonlit skies.

And now in the silent gloaming,
When the twilight brought him rest;
With hands by labor wearied,
And a heart by care oppressed,
He sought to grasp the visions
That had passed across his way,
And write the burning words that stirred
His spirit through the day.

And the evening shadows deepened,
As he vainly strove to bring
The full harmonic cadence
To the songs he fain would sing,
Until weary and disheartened,
With spirits sad and low,
"I will write no more," he murmured,
"All my love of song forego.

"Naught but poverty accruing
From the labors of my pen,
Now, henceforth I will forsake it,
Never court the muse again;
Let her visions fade and vanish,
With the raptures that they bring,
Leave their wild ethereal beauty
For more favored ones to sing."

Sitting there within his workshop,
In the silence and the gloom,
As the darkness deeper gathered,
Stealing through the quiet room,
While upon his heart the shadows
Gathered still more dense and deep,
Till outwearied and o'erburdened
Nature soothed her child to sleep.

And as he slept, a strange, weird dream
Came over his weary brain,
With power to soothe his troubled heart,
And the heavy sense of pain;
For he heard his own songs chanted,
In homes throughout the land,
Urging to new-born energy
Full many a nerveless hand.

And by the couch of suffering,
Of painful, labored breath,
And through the gloom that follows up
The sable pall of death,

A sweet voice in a measured cadence
Soothed look, and breath of pain;
And entranced, the dreamer listened
To his own sweet words again.

And the vision slowly faded,
But whispering softly near,
A sweet ethereal voice fell
Upon the listener's ear,
Till a quiet joy stole o'er him,
Filling his troubled breast,
As the earth is filled with glory,
From the golden doors of the west.

"Turn back again to thy study,
Sad heart, for not in vain
Have the clouds and shadows fallen,
And thy bitter tears like rain;
For the touch of human sympathy
Is sure a blessed thing,
And its deepest tones from very need
Thy soul hath learned to sing.

There are burning words thy pen must trace,
Ere the bonds of song be riven;
Nor dare to wrap in a napkin's fold
The talents God hath given.
Go touch thy hand to the living lyre,
And wake its notes for me,
And the conscious joy of duty done,
Thy rich reward will be."

It ceased; but still re-echoing
Through the heart's mysterious halls,
The thrilling voice of his happy dream
Like a benediction falls,
And it nerved his heart for the struggle,
And fortified his will,
In the toil of life before him,
His mission to fulfill.

BELLS OF THE NEW YEAR.

1881.

Ring out, wild bells, on the wintry air!
Ring out the old year, full of care!
With all the sin its record tells;
Ring, ring it out, ye midnight bells!

Ring out its deeds of blood and death,
Ring out the cannon's fiery breath,
Ring out its scenes of vice and woe,
And all our passions base and low!

Ring out for aye its doubts and fears,
Its swollen tide of bitter tears,
The wrongs our hearts may not forget,
The faded hopes that haunt us yet.

Ring out wild bells! your sweetest chime,
As from the mighty womb of Time,
Another fated year is born,
Rocked in the cradle of the morn.

Ring in with it the reign of peace,
The blissful boon of love's increase,
Till swells from every vale and hill
The heavenly anthem of "good will".

Ring in through Mercy's open door,
Blessings and comfort on the poor;
Until consumed in pity's flame
Squalor and famine want a name.

Ring in a stronger tie to bind
Together hearts of human kind,
Until our charity shall span
The common brotherhood of man.

MY DREAM.

1881.

A pleasant dream of thee, dear friend!
As in the darkness still and deep,
Descended on my weary brain,
The blessing of a restful sleep.

The throng had left the busy streets,
And silence in the village reigned,
Saving the watch-dog's distant bay,
Or moaning of the autumn wind.

Methought again my feet had prest
The rugged Youghiogheny hills,
Whose misty crowns and sunny slopes,
A pleasant page of memory fills.

But sweeter far than all of these,
Though clad in Nature's utmost grace,
Came glancing through my happy dream
The vision of thy genial face.

The pressure of a kindly hand,
The loving light of tender eyes,
The music of a gentle voice,
Stole o'er me in a sweet surprise.

And still vibrating through my heart,
The echo of that music swells;
As floats upon the summer air,
The melody of sweet-toned bells.

And even yet I feel the glow
Of rapture o'er my spirit stealing,
And urging to a fuller flow,
The current of my better feeling.

And hope takes up the glad refrain,
And brushes with her buoyant wing
The cords of Love, and wakes again,
The songs which she alone can sing.

And may these notes harmonious sweep
Over our separate lives, and fill
The measure of our fondest hopes,
Obedient to the Master's will.

PENSIVE MUSINGS.

1881.

I sit alone in the gloaming,
As the twilight curtain falls,
And the dusky shadows gather
Along the silent walls.

And my heart is sad and lonely,
As I listen to the moan
Of the winds that plead for entrance,
With an almost human tone.

And I think of thee, beloved friend!
By the home fire, far away,
Where my day-thoughts love to linger,
And my sleeping fancies play.

And I wonder, in my musing,
If thy thoughts, as wild and free
As my own, to night are straying
On these winged winds to me.

Oh, how sweet, that thought unshackled
And unbound by space, can glide
O'er the intervening distance,
Swiftly to each other's side!

Thus I daily walk beside thee,
And my truant thoughts aspire
To a more exalted standard,
To a manhood better, higher!

Pardon, then, my pensive rhyming,
The untutored minstrelsy
Of a heart forever beating
Truly, tenderly for thee!

THE RETROSPECT.

1881.

'Tis well, sometimes, to pause and look
Back through the vista of the years,
And read, as from an open book,
The record of their smiles and tears;
Their lessons, learned through hopes and fears.

Back to the years of long ago,
When days were long and skies were bright,
When changing seasons, passing slow,
Still brought an ever new delight
Of beauty to my wondering sight.

To years of manhood's early prime,
When Love, on her vibrating strings,
Attuned to life's unwritten rhyme,
Touched all my being's hidden springs,
Wooing my heart from baser things.

Till o'er the brow of toil and care,
The halo of her light was shed,
And e'en the sad and chilly air
Of night grew soft, as overhead
The mystic light of love was shed.

But not unmixed with bitterness,
These pleasant years of life flew by;
Each brought its burden of distress,
Its bitter tears to dim the eye,
And clouds to fill the summer sky.

For more than once the angel crost
The threshold of my dwelling o'er,
And taking those it loved the most,
Departed to the silent shore,
Whence travelers return no more.

But though my cup of life has been
At Marah's fountain often filled,
And dreams of joy which Hope had seen,
Faded before me unfulfilled,
As early flowers by frost are killed,

Yet, as I look with thoughtful eyes,
Backward along the past to night,
Events that bore the dark disguise
Of trials, dawn upon my sight,
As blessings in the present light.

And e'en the afflictions which o'erpast,
And bowed my stricken spirit low,
I see and humbly own at last,
Among my mercies, ordered so
By Him whence all our blessings flow.

For in the Elysian world above,
Our dear ones live, whom we call dead;
In brighter light and purer love,
With Heaven's eternal freshness shed
Abroad, its glory overhead.

And we who longer toil and wait,
 Still in our heart of hearts must own
The influence from beyond the gate
 Of pearl, that binds us to our own;
The mortal to the spirit flown.

Teach me more clearly, Lord, to see
 Through every varying circumstance
Thy sovereign will, and trust to Thee,
 The changing "Circle of events",
And mysteries of Thy providence.

AN ACROSTIC.—Maria Smith.

1881.

May a pure and noble heart be thine,
And every act reveal it;
Remember that in the darkest day,
In heaven the sun still shines alway,
And only the clouds conceal it.

Strive then, with a conscience clear and strong,
My child! in the life before thee,
In confidence, though shadows lower,
That in its over-ruling power
Heaven still is bending o'er thee.

THE ROBIN'S "SNOWBOUND".

1881.

Ah, gentle bird! with the glowing breast,
Away! to some safe retreat, away!
For earth is piled with drifting snow,
And the Storm King rides abroad today!

And his hoary mantle all day long
Through the shuddering air has drifted down,
And a cheerless perch is thine, poor bird!
With naked feet in the Storm King's gown.

Thou hast come too soon from the sunny south,
With its verdant slopes and budding flowers,
For the fields are white and the air is chill,
In this dreary, northern land of ours.

Better have stayed in the orange groves,
Till the woodlands wake to the south-wind's kiss;
Better—delaying domestic cares,
Retire from the storms of a day like this,

And wait in patience for brighter hours,
Which the coming season soon must bring,
Then we will listen to catch thy song,
And watch for the flash of thy shining wing.

CONSECRATION.

The sweet, sad story of the cross,
Tonight is fresh before me,
Undimmed by all the passing years,
And shimmering through the mist of tears,
Its influence hovers o'er me.

The glory of unselfishness,
That crowned Christ's life of beauty,
Gleams down the ages, and today
Illumines with its gentle ray
Our lines of daily duty.

His perfect manhood stands alone!
Peerless in humble splendor!
August and dignified, yet mild,
Touching the world, yet undefiled,
Warm, sympathetic, tender!

Lord of the Universe, He stood
In meek and lowly station!
A homeless wanderer in the street!
For us He trod with bleeding feet,
The desert of Temptation!

Our sins upon His sinless soul,
Too deep for line or plummet,
He dared the nameless agony,
The blood drops of Gethsemane,
The cross on Calvary's summit!

For us He trod the halls of Death,
The Divine for the human!
And taking, with His hand of Grace,
The veil from the Shekinah's face,
Gave us our soul-communion!

That priceless gift, by which we come
In touch with God, where, feeling
Our need of His Omnipotence,
We take His proffered hand, from whence
Comes the free touch of healing.

So Holy Father! touch our hearts,
That gratitude upwelling,
May bring us to the Savior's feet,
With humble, chastened hearts made meet
For Thy Divine indwelling!

Hold Thou our hands, and CONSECRATE
Our talents and our ALL to Thee!
In duty's path, unto Thy will
Obedient, make and keep us still
Thy children, through the years to be!

"UNDER THE SHADOW OF THY WINGS."

1882.

"Hide me under the shadow of thy wings."
Psalm XVII., 8.

Under the shadow of thy wings,
Teach me, Oh Lord! to hide;
Sheltered from each besetting sin,
Or sinful thought, that stealing in,
Allures me from Thy side.

Under the shadow of thy wings
Hide from the noontide ray!
Lest underneath the load of care
And toil that duty bids me bear,
I faint beside the way.

Under the shadow of thy wings,
When darkness shrouds the hills,
And slumber with Lethean hand
Holds me within her "Border Land,"
Hide me from all its ills.

There hide me while the heavy clouds
And dark'ning mists of sorrow,
Almost shut out the cheering rays
Of hope, which, through the gloomy days,
Tell of a brighter morrow.

There, too, the only safe retreat
When the darkness is dividing;
Oh! keep me when the sunlight falls
Into the heart's mysterious halls,
Under thy wings abiding!

Into this covert let me flee,
While the tide of life is swelling,—
A refuge safe, from the strife and din
Of the busy world, where vice and sin
May not invade my dwelling.

Under the shadow of thy wings,
When the hour supreme shall come!
Oh! keep my soul, as the boatman pale,
With his silent oars and snowy sail,
Shall carry me safely home.

THE MANIAC PRISONER.

This circumstance was related in a periodical.

1882.

The maniac on his prison bed,
Raved incoherently and wild,
And tossed with pain his weary head,
As oft by turns he wept or smiled.

The wrinkled brow, the faded eye,
The lines by pain and suffering wrought,
The shaggy beard and whitened locks,
The snows of four-score years had caught.

The narrow bounds of prison walls,
With piteous sights and sounds combined,
For more than half a century fed
The fancies of his darkened mind.

Crazed by the wine-cup's mad'ning draught,
His hand a brother's blood had shed,
And through the anguish of remorse,
For aye the light of reason fled.

So through the long, slow-lapsing years,
The hopeless maniac's restless feet,
With aimless steps passed to and fro,
Along his prison's narrow beat.

But now reclining on his couch,
His life-tide ebbing fast away,
Haggard, and pale, and desolate,
The aged prisoner dying lay.

But as the chilling dews of death
Fell on his senses silently,
The light of reason came again
A moment, o'er his brow and eye;

As sounding through the vacant halls
And darkened portals of the brain,
Like a sweet note of music, falls
An echo from his youth again,

And from his lips the voluble,
And often senseless, muttering died,
And with a childish, quavering voice,
"Sweet mother take my hand!" he cried.

And at the outer gate of life,
An angel turned the silent key,
And from the threshold of his cell,
Death set the maniac prisoner free!

NIGHT.

1883.

I love the quiet hour that flings
The twilight from its sable wings,
And stills the wild bird's carolings.

The hour that opens wide the gates
Of night, behind whose bars and grates
The dim, imprisoned darkness waits.

The hour when dusky shadows creep
Around me, growing dense and deep,
Till over all the black waves sweep.

I love the hour when on my eye
Gleam out in the o'er-arching sky
The lamps that God has hung on high.

The hour that brings the glad release
From day-time care; the world's surcease
Of labor, and its hour of peace.

A breathing spell in the wild chase
Of pleasure, the exciting race
For gold and honor, power and place.

A time to brush the dust away
From hands and feet that all the day
Were toiling in the world's highway.

A time to rest the weary brain,
That worn with toil, and full of pain
Comes to the quiet night again.

The welcome night! how sweet and blest
To nature weary and distressed,
Comes her great panacea, rest!

Deep be the slumber that she brings,
Bright be the dreams that from her wings
Fall on us, sweet the song she sings;

And every grace the couch adorn,
In those dim chambers of the morn,
Where strength from weariness is born.

PROSPECT MOUNT.

1883.

And this is Prospect Mount! the day
 Slow breaking through the shadows,
Shone 'round us, while beneath us lay
 The fog-enshrouded meadows!

And standing on its verdant crown,
 Bathed in the sun's new splendor,
I feel the mantle o'er me thrown,
 Of feelings warm and tender.

For though prophetic winds which mourn
 The season's sure advances,
The maple's gorgeous locks had shorn
 From off their naked branches,

Yet like a carpet in the grove
 The russet leaves were lying,
While sweetly through the boughs above,
 The south-west winds were sighing.

The fields in their green livery drest,
Through dewy tears were smiling,
And with the diamonds on their breast,
The sun's slant rays beguiling.

The hills, whose silent hymns of praise,
Now greet the early comer,
Roll grandly off into the haze
And glow of Indian Summer.

The Beaver's course, we trace along,
Through ever pleasant changes,
By ghostly mist that hangs among
The hilltops' western ranges.

While from the eastward, clear and strong,
With slow majestic motion,
The broad Ohio sweeps along
Its pathway to the ocean.

And nearer, where the fertile lands,
To sunward slopes are swelling,
Begirt with fields and orchard stands
The Farmer's vine-clad dwelling.

Oh, happy spot among the hills!
Oh, dear ones, therein dwelling!
Long may the quiet peace that fills
Your home be upward welling.

Long may your table by the hand
Of generous bounty drest,
Grant blessings to the household band,
And to the coming guest.

And may your hearts, like this bright hill,
In life's warm sunshine glow,
Above the mists of tears which fill,
And vex the vales below.

THE MEETING.

1885.

Just inside Life's busy threshold,
Smiling babe and grandsire meet,
One with the path of life before him,
Strewn with thorns for the baby feet;
One with the journey almost ended,
And the toil almost complete.

One with hands that are soft and dimpled,
Reaching out to the future years;
One with hands that are faint and weary,
Bearing the burden of toil and tears;
Hands that have patiently struggled
In the battle four-score years.

One with the sweet and mimic playing
Of the little unshod feet;
One tottering near the untried way,
Where the seen and unseen meet;
Where the feet of angels just beyond
Are pressing the golden street.

One with eyes that are bright and kindling,
And brow that is smooth and fair;
One with dim and failing vision,
Careworn brow and snowy hair,
Touched with a halo of the glory,
That awaits him over there.

Help us, heaven, to guard and cherish
Smiling babe and grandsire old,
One to the summertime of manhood,
One to the winter snows and cold;
Praying that in the great hereafter,
Both may meet in the heavenly fold.



THE OLD MEETING HOUSE
The Ridge, near Barnesville, Ohio

And fancy to my eye can show,
As mirrored by some magic power,
The group that forty years ago
Spent here with me the meeting hour.

(See Poem).

THE OLD MEETING HOUSE.

1885.

I sit within the quiet walls
Of the old meeting house again,
On whose bare floor the sunlight falls
Through open door and window pane.

I mark the quiet of the place,
Still, save the cricket in the wall,
The wind's low murmur, with a trace
Of sadness, and the wild bird's call.

And memory busy with the things
And happenings of other years,
Over my heart a shadow brings,
And to my eyes the ready tears.

And fancy to my eyes doth show,
As mirrored by some magic power,
The group that forty years ago,
Spent here, with me, the meeting hour,

And from these empty benches seem
To peer, old faces, row on row,
As, sometimes, in a passing dream,
We meet the friends of long ago.

Faces and forms that swept apart,
Upon the tossing sea of life,—
Now toiling in the world's great mart,
Or resting from its weary strife.

Some in their graves across the way,
For many a year have sweetly slept,
Some dead, some living far away,
Have hoped and feared and toiled and wept.

But sitting musing, now they seem
Just as of old, in childhood's day,
When life before me like a dream
Of some enchanted cloudland lay.

I live again among the friends,
With whom my infant lot was cast,
And in my spirit strangely blends
The present with the changeful past.

Oh precious friends of early days!
Oh spot to memory ever dear!
Long may I love the simple ways
And sober truths you taught me here!

THE "STAR OF THE CHEYENNES."

1885.

God speed thee! Star of the bold Cheyennes!
For I see in thy youthful face,
In thy lofty thought and earnest words,
A hope for thy dusky race.

A hope that soon and forevermore
Our frontier wars shall cease,
And up from civilized Indian homes
Shall arise the smoke of peace!

That the fertile soil of the Occident,
To the red man's toil shall yield
Its fabulous wealth of golden grain
On many a harvest field.

That the lowing kine on a thousand hills,
Shall answer the red man's call,
That fruit may cling to his orchard boughs,
And vines to his cottage wall.

That over his wide, wild hunting ground,
Churches and schools may rise,
Till a thousand spires where now are none
May fret our western skies.

Till the might and majesty of the law
Shall always stand for the right,
And shield alike with powerful arm,
The red man and the white.

THE MINISTRY OF SUFFERING.

1885.

The ministry of suffering! Can it be
That in the course of God's economy,
The agencies of sickness and of pain,
That touch the heart, and terrify the brain,
Are messengers of mercy that fulfill
The unerring purpose of His holy will?

Ah! when their hand is laid on cheek and brow,
Till beauty fades, and strength and courage bow,
Until the light and bloom of health are flown,
And Reason trembles on her fragile throne,
Until the vital tide is ebbing low,
And Life's exhausted pulse is beating slow,
When Being shudders on the fatal brink
Of Dissolution, whence we ever shrink,
Through the deep mist of tears we scarce can see
The pointing finger of Divinity!
Or from the couch of suffering recognize
Celestial blessings in such dark disguise!

Yet oftentimes 'tis this alone can prove
The perfect fullness of Eternal love!—
Our hearts engrossed with all the sordid strife
For gain, the glittering pageantry of life,
Ambition in the lists of fame to shine,
Or love that worships at an earthly shrine,
Fail sometimes in our busy life to see
Our obligations to the Deity!
Fail to remember, that His hand on high
Which leads the starry host along the sky,
Which guides the planet on its devious way,
And with the sun unlocks the gate of day,
Which holds the stormy winds and waves asleep,
Or sets them free at will upon the deep,
Bestows His blessings with parental care
Upon our heads, and numbers every hair,
Noteth the raven's cry, the sparrow's fall,
Painteth the lilies by the garden wall,
And writes on earth below and sky above,
In lines of beauty, God's eternal love.

But when the adverse winds of life shall blow,
Until our hearts seem over-charged with woe,
Or when the fever burns along our veins,
And nature sinks exhausted with her pains,
Then, as on drooping wing the weary dove
Flies to her cote, the domicile of love!
So we, when hope, and even courage flies,
When trust in human help and wisdom dies,
Throwing ourselves upon the Shepherd's care,
Whose arms the weakest of the lambs will bear,
We find in trusting to Almighty Power,
His strength made perfect in our weakest hour!
And from the couch of suffering, sanctified
By the sweet presence of the Crucified,
We look upon the world of life, and own
Eternal love in all our journey shown!

And thus, as humbled underneath His rod,
We look abroad upon the works of God,
The sun with an unwonted splendor shines,
And richer clusters crowd the purpling vines,
In brighter hues the evening sky is drest,
As sinks the sun adown the glowing west,
All nature wears a garb of beauty rare,
And quiet joy pervades the very air,
To him who sees in all, the deep impress
Of Deity with reverent thankfulness.

His clearer vision sees in all the strife,
The conflicts and the trials of our life,
The guiding hand that beckons to his rest,
And owns in simple faith, "God knoweth best".
And ever trusting His Almighty power,
For comfort in the dark and trying hour,
The mede of steadfast, Christian faith is won,
And his heart breathes the prayer, "Thy will be done".

Thus may our lives by suffering be blest,
The path of sorrow may, for us, be best,
The omniscient eye of God alone can see
Through the dark curtain of futurity;
Alone can tell what springs of joy may flow
From the deep darkness of our present woe,—
And in the glory of the endless day,
When all the tears of earth are wiped away,
Mayhap the whitest robes in all that throng,
The sweetest voices in the heavenly song,
The brightest diadems the angels wear,
Are given to those, who from the toil and care,
The tribulation, the unequal strife
With sickness, and the varied ills of life,
Come through the painful ordeals purified,
As gold in the world's crucial furnace tried,
Polished and radiant with Diviner light,
Bearing the Master's image clear and bright.

OUR REFUGE.

1885.

There are seasons when our sorrows
Come to be too great a load,
When our bleeding feet grow weary,
In life's steep and rugged road.

There are seasons when our heart-aches,
And our pains are manifold,
When our cup at Marah's fountain,
Fills with bitterness untold.

Seasons when the angry beating
Of life's storms is so intense,
That we blindly struggle onward,
Seeking shelter and defense.

There are seasons when affliction
Smites us with an iron rod,
Driving us for very shelter
To the refuge of our God.

Happy thought, Oh, Christian! bending
Underneath thy load of care,
That the Master condescending,
Still will help thy load to bear.

Still will temper down thy anguish,
Guard the flood-gates of thy woe;
Whisper to the waves of sorrow,
That they may not overflow.

Let us then still closer pressing,
At His feet cast all our care;
Asking, as our special blessing,
That He help our load to bear.

Asking that His grace, sufficient
Unto every need be given,
Till life's ills are all forgotten
In the crowning joy of Heaven.

THE DEAD MILLIONAIRE.

He stood above his fellows, bold
In power and wealth and influence,
He was, forsooth, a money prince,
Was fawned on, honored, and cajoled.

His hands by magic seeming, passed
Whatever things he touched to gold,
Until his wealth, by millions told,
Grew into aggregations vast!

Broad lands where sun-kissed valleys dip,
Great railways stretching south and north,
And thundering engines echoed forth
Confession of his ownership.

Rare were his opportunities,
The skill to plan, the wealth to do,
The iron will that could pursue
To ultimate success, were his.

No wish he could not gratify—
Known to commercial toil and strife,
In all the busy whirl of life—
That power could win or gold could buy.

But there are bounds of Providence,
O'er which we dare not, cannot go,
Where all alike must meet and bow,
And own our human impotence!

So, in the zenith of his pride,
With strong hands holding fast his store
And reaching eagerly for more,
God touched him, and the rich man died!

Died as the beggar dies, no more
His untold millions could avail
To stay the passage of the sail,
That bore him to the unseen shore!

Death makes men equal! low and high!
Naked and poor we quit the bound
Of life, but, in the darkness 'round,
Faith gives what riches cannot buy!

And he, who rich in faith, can bring
Unto an hour supreme, as this,
The assurance of eternal bliss,
Is richer far than any king!

For when life's golden chain is riven,
Not all earth's riches may suffice
To bear one soul to paradise,
Or ope one pearl-set gate of Heaven.

HOME MEMORIES.

1885.

Lines addressed to the author's brother.

I am sitting, brother, thinking
 Of the years of long ago,
When life's morning winds were blowing,
 And the tide was at its flow.
Ere our barks had drifted seaward,
 Or had kissed the billow's foam,
Ere were weighed the heavy anchors
 Binding to our childhood's home.

Thinking of the long, bright summers,
 Golden grain and fruiting trees,
Crowning all the hills with splendor,
 Such as childhood only sees.
Childhood! Which, with eyes wide open
 For its treasures, soon could tell
Where the wild grape hung its clusters,
 Where the nuts of autumn fell.

Thinking of the grand old maples,
 In the grove beyond the lane,
Where, when spring struck off the shackles
 Of the winter's icy reign,
Rich and sweet to meet the sunshine
 Gleaming through the naked wood,
Leaped in all their veins, the currents
 Of the sugar-laden blood.

Thinking of the laughing brooklet,
 Where we watched the minnows play,
Of the barn beside the orchard,
 Fragrant with the new-mown hay;

Where the harvest season gathered
In, its wealth of golden sheaves,
Where the swallow nests were builded
Underneath the shelt'ring eaves.

Of the spring that from the hillside,
In its sparkling coolness burst,
Where at summer's sultry noontide
We were wont to slake our thirst—
Ah! those waters may not mirror
Back the forms they gave us then,
For those boys, as if by magic,
Are transformed to bearded men.

And as thus my memory catches
Glimpses of our boyhood's prime,
Backward through the years departed
Seems to roll the tide of time,
Childhood's silver notes are floating
To my ears on every breeze,
Comes before my eyes a vision
Of the old home 'mid the trees.

Forms and faces of the loved ones
Of the household come again,
Thronging through the halls of memory
Opened in my restless brain.
Round the old familiar fireside,
Every form again appears,
As in childhood's days, regardless
Of the flight of thirty years.

Ah, what changes! I remember,
As the phantoms of the past,
Slowly steal into the shadows
Of the distance, dim and vast,
That across the swelling river,
Death has borne with muffled oar,
Loving ones into the harbor
Of the distant, unseen shore.

Some within the quiet graveyard,
Near the old home, calmly rest,
Some beneath the turf are sleeping
Sweetly in the distant west;
Some are living where the shadows
Round our home of childhood play,
Others out on life's broad ocean
Drifting, drifting far away.

Ah! how time's resistless changes
Break our loving household bands!
How the winged years divide us
With their unrelenting hands!
Yet, amid the rush and bustle
Of the world, Oh! let us turn
Sometimes to the dear old hearthstone,
Where our childhood altars burn!

And a fervent prayer I utter,
That although we drift apart
In the journey; when the traffic
Of the great world's busy mart,
Shall have faded from our vision,
As we near the hour of rest,
We may meet beyond the river,
In the harbors of the blest!

THE SNOW STORM.

1886.

Far south of east, the sun arose
From beds of cloud that winter morn,
But cold and cheerless was the orb,
From which the golden locks were shorn
By the dull haze, which overhead
Its all-pervading curtain spread.

The vane upon the steeple stood
Eastward, and trembling in the flood
Of winds, that on the village poured,
And through the naked maples roared,
Hung in mid-air its silent form
In prophecy of coming storm.
And as the chilly day wore on,
More dimly shone the waning sun,
Till long before the hour of night,
Its pallid face was hidden quite
Amid dense folds of leaden cloud,
Revealing neither rift nor rent,
And twilight shadows came, ere yet
The sun had touched the Occident.

So came the night, and from her wings
Of darkness, quivering, fluttering down,
The snowflakes on the strong east wind
Came eddying, whirling through the town.
Into each alley, lane and street,
The blinding storm, incessant, beat;
Alike on hut and mansion fell
The spotless mantle of the snow,
And many a mimic hill and dell
Grew in the drifting current's flow.
Against the great glass fronts it came,
And piled high up the window frame.

Down the long pavements row on row,
The street lights glimmered through the snow,
And quickly passed the hurrying feet
Along the half deserted street.

Within the well llumined stores,
Protected from the storm out-doors,
A few late customers delayed,
Around the fire to chat and trade.

But one by one the lights went out,
And one by one the busy men
Of toil and trade, their faces turned
To the sweet lights of home again.
The hand upon the yielding latch,
The footstep in the lighted hall,
The music of a gentle voice,
And kindly answer to the call,
The slippers and the easy chair,
By the warm fireside placed with care,
Dispel the thoughts of storm and snow,
Before the home fire's ruddy glow.

The good-wife at her sewing sat,
The children conned their lessons o'er
Beside the lamp; the baby played
Among his treasures on the floor,
Or climbed upon the father's knee,
With artless prattle telling o'er
The unknown tale with childish glee.

And thus the social ev'ning sped,
With pleasant stories, told or read;
Forgotten was the storm that kept
Its carnival without, that crept
Through every tempting crack, and swept
Fiercely against the shuttered pane
That rattled to the blast again.

But bedtime came; the chapter read,
Had charmed the baby's flaxen head
To sleep upon the mother's breast,
Where childhood fondly loves to rest;
And soon the blessed boon of sleep
Came to the household, as the sweep
Of angel pinions, letting fall
God's benediction upon all.

Thrice blest is he, who, from the strife
And toil and weariness of life,
When evening's welcome shadows come,
Finds rest and happiness at home.

Oh! home, most blessed spot of earth!
 Where constant love and kindness reign
 Within the family domain,
Where the staunch virtues have their birth,
Which make our manhood truly great,
The hope and honor of the state!
What potent force is thine that turns
The heart, where e'er we roam, to thee?
Thy fireside altar ever burns,
 The pole-star on our stormy sea,
Thy sacred influence still must be
 The corner-stone whereon are built
The bulwarks of our liberty!—

All night the chilly east wind swept
About the village as it slept!
Along the white, deserted street,
The police on his lonely beat,
Paused on his weary round to hear
The spectre storm-king's footfall near:
Sounded all night his piteous moan,
In sad and dreary monotone,
As on the silent, sleeping town
His ghostly mantle floated down.

But never night so dark or wild,
On which the morning never smiled;
The deepest shadows may not stay,
The darkest clouds will roll away;
And, born of this tempestuous night,
 Came, stealing slowly, cold and gray,
 The dawning of another day;
Revealing in the morning light,
A world as new and pure as seems
The sweetest fancy of our dreams,
 Unrivalled in its spotless dress,
 Ethereal in its loveliness!

On street and sidewalk lay the snow
Knee-deep, and soon a goodly row
Of men, with shovel and with broom,
Betrayed the sudden business boom,
That with the snow storm came to town;
Until, white-walled, the pavement lay
On either side, a narrow way,
With footsteps passing up and down.

The sleigh-bell's merry chime rings out
Upon the air, the teamster's shout
Comes shrilly on the ears, the rout
And romp of childhood, wild with play,
The engine on its iron way,—
 Waking the echoes that had slept,—
To welcome in the busy day,
Came shrieking, toiling through the snow,
 And from its path, on either side
 The white waves of the crystal tide
From the great cleaving snow-plow flow.

And soon the news-boy on his round
Shouts "morning papers!" and our eyes
Glance o'er events and happenings,
Of the great world that round us lies;

And as I read, I think how strange
And passing wonderful the change
The years have wrought! Upon the wing
Of the tamed lightning, now we bring
The news from every clime and zone,
Full and co-equal with our own;
Comes pulsing from each busy mart
 Of earth, beneath the storm and dash
 Of ocean, the electric flash,
The beating of the world's great heart!

And in the city's constant stir,
Amid the wild incessant whir
Of wheels, the hissing rush of steam,
The electric candle's dazzling gleam,
And with the almost painful stress,
And clang and clatter of the press,
That triumph of a rapid age
Flings from its forms the printed page,
Which out upon the unconscious night,
Like birds of passage take their flight.

Oh! world of anxious push and strain!
Of grasping hand and restless brain!
Of avarice and engrossing care!
I sometimes pause and wonder where
The constantly increasing rate
At which we live will terminate!
But terminate it will and must!
 The active hand, the planning brain,
 Outwearied by life's constant strain,
 Outworn by all its toil and pain,
Full soon will crumble into dust;
Full soon will sleep to wake no more,
And all life's fitful storm be o'er.

THE NEGLECTED FLOWER.

1886.

Alone by the dusty roadside,
A floweret meekly grew,
In the heat of the sultry noontide,
In the night's refreshing dew,

Till the folded leaves expanded
To a rose of perfect bloom,
And the winds of evening dallied
With its delicate perfume.

Day by day the tide of travel,
In the busy bustling town,
Heedless of the op'ning blossom,
Still went surging up and down.

And the robes of pride and fashion,
Swept above the lovely flower,
And the feet of careless passers
Threatened it in every hour.

When dust of the highway gathered
On it, again and again,
'Twas washed by the gentle falling
Of the pearly drops of rain.

And there, by the wayside bending,
In the evening's twilight hour,
With tears on her cheeks of crimson,
Blushed the neglected flower!

And my heart was touched with pity,
That a rose so sweet and fair,
Unnoticed and neglected thus,
Should waste its sweetness there.

And I thought, how many blossoms
Of human-kind have grown,
Thus by life's dusty roadside,
Neglected, sad, and lone!

Whose cheerful and modest beauty,
Though hidden by weeds of fate,
Surpassed, perhaps, pretentious ones,
That the haughty world calls great.

So, tenderly, I gathered it
And washed the dust away,
And carried it to the chamber,
Where a sad, sweet, sick girl lay.

And there in the morning sunlight,
That beautiful bit of bloom,
Had filled a heart with tenderness,
A chamber with perfume.

SILENT WORSHIP.

1886.

I sat among the worshippers,
The silence was unbroken,
For not a word of prayer or praise,
By mortal tongue was spoken;
The silence, sweet and solemn, fell
Upon the gathered throng,
But the gospel's living current
Flowed preciously along,

From vessel unto vessel,
From prostrate soul to soul;
The bowed in spirit felt the power,
Of living virtue roll.
And waiting in the Master's name,
To know His sovereign will,
There fell upon the spirit's ear,
The whisper, "Peace, be still."

Ah! the great Minister was there,
Dispensing heavenly good,
Unto the luke-warm ones, reproof,
Unto the hungry, food;
And some who came in poverty,
Faithless and destitute,
In this sweet silence, felt their faith
And confidence recruit.

Oh, 'tis a precious privilege!
With worldly thoughts laid low.
Silent before the throne of Grace,
In penitence to bow:
Oh, 'tis a precious privilege!
To feel, as true, his word
That they shall have their strength renewed,
Who wait upon the Lord!

Oh, gracious God! a rebel, I
Against Thy power have striven,
And yet presume to come to Thee,
Craving to be forgiven;
Then let me humbly bow with those
Who on Thy mercy call!
And while they feast, grant me the crumbs
That from Thy table fall.

EQUALITY.

1887.

I sat upon the river's brink,
And watched the eddying waters flow,
And saw its bubbles rise and sink,
And tiny wavelets come and go;

And listened to the gentle sound
Of plashing waters on the shore,
The treble of their quick rebound,
The waterfall, in distant roar.

And felt my heart grow strangely warm,
And throb with sweet poetic feeling;
Till o'er me crept a quiet charm,
Like summer breezes 'round me stealing.

And on this trunk, with moss o'ergrown,
Half buried in the dancing stream,
Lulled by the quiet undertone
Of laughing waves I sit and dream.

My heart with grateful homage filled,
To Him, whose universal love,
His wide domain with beauty filled;
The earth beneath, the sky above.

For even winter's leafless bower,
The beauty of the fields and hills,
The glory of the evening hour,
The heart with admiration fills.

Even the humblest life may know
Its quiet pathway still secure,
And the world's purest joys may flow
For them, the lowly and obscure.

The beauty of the budding spring,
The sweetness of the summer's bloom,
The gorgeous hues the autumns bring:
And winter's shroud upon the tomb.

The flowers which deck the woods and fields,
The song-bird's carol in the grove,
With every charm that Nature yields
To those who own her rule of love:

All these alike to high and low!
The rich and poor may equal share
These gifts the hands of God bestow
In bounty, free as light and air!

I thank Thee Lord! that thus we find
Thy blessings reach the poor and lowly,
And weak or lame, or halt or blind,
Invoke Thy Fatherhood, most holy.

And when we cross the swelling tide,
Called by the great death-angel o'er,
If through the power of Him who died
For us, we reach the "Shining Shore",

'Twill not be asked, if less or more
Of wealth the parted soul possessed;
But those, the rich in faith and love
Of God, shall enter into rest.

NEARING THE SHORE.

1887.

Sarah Edgerton, a sister of the writer, after a protracted illness, died Second Month 16th, 1887, in the twenty-seventh year of her age. One of her last expressions, before the delirium which preceded death clouded her outwearied brain, was, "I think my frail barque is nearing the Other Shore."

Frail barque upon life's troubled seas!
Tossing amid the billow's foam,
Thy sails are filling with the breeze
That bears the storm-tost vessel home!

Thy prow is toward the distant shore,
Thy Pilot at the yielding helm,
The tempest shall not harm thee more,
Nor the dark breakers overwhelm.

Safely outriding every gale
Of doubt and fear, that sink and swell,
We watch on thy receding sail
Each fluttering signal of farewell,

Till the eternal clouds, that hide
The unseen from our finite view,
A moment seems to roll aside
To let thy snowy sail sweep through

Into the calm and tranquil bay,
The haven of eternal rest,
Where Heaven's own fleets at anchor lay
Amid the "Islands of the Blest."

Where breaking on the golden strand
The spray of crystal waves is cast;
Thy keel hath touched the shining sand,
Thy weary voyage ends at last!

And there, above the dark distress
At which we weep with downcast eyes,
Thy angel feet, sweet sister, press
The flowery shores of Paradise!

REUNION.

Written for, and read at the Edgerton reunion, Barnesville, Ohio, 1893.

Oh, kindred! underneath these skies,
 Which in their autumn glory bend
Above our native hills, that rise,
 Sun-kissed, around us, we extend
 A greeting warm, to kin and friend!

We meet to-day, and would renew
 Upon this spot our youthful prime,
Reviving memories fond and true,
 Which in the Lethean urn of Time
 Lay hidden from our outward view.

Return, oh tide of years, to-day!
 And bring my boyhood back to me!
The bright days, passing slow away,
 Full of the promised joys to be,
 The mirage of Life's open sea!

Again a child with flaxen hair,
 I gaze upon the earth and sky,
Seeing through the transparent air,
 New beauty in the fields that lie
 Outspread before my charmed eye.

Again the sunward slopes I see,
 Starred with the violet's eyes of blue,
The sweet banks of anemone,
 The dells wherein the lilies blew,
 With crystal waters sparkling through.

Again I list the blue-bird's song,
The swallows twittering from the eaves
Of the old barn of logs, where long
Ago, we stored the summer sheaves,
The barn among the orchard leaves!

I watch the purpling clusters hang
Upon the vines. Again I see,
From boughs whereon the oriole sang,
The luscious fruit hang temptingly,
As childhood's eyes alone can see.

Again I note the squirrel's leap
From bough to bough, the chipmunk's call,
With boyish zest I toss the heap
Of fallen leaves, and see through all,
The spots whereon the brown nuts fall.

I stoop once more beside the brink
Of yonder spring, whose crystal flow
Reflected as I bent to drink,
A boyish face so long ago,—
Aye! more than forty years ago!

And here, beside the old hearthstone,
Toil-worn, or weary from our play,
We gathered, when the sun had gone,
And the last embers of the day
Burned from the western hills away.

Ah! tender memories gather here,
Unbidden floods of thought sweep o'er
My brain. Forgive the falling tear!
'Tis holy ground! I pass the door,
And tread with unshod feet the floor.

Here, breaking on my ravished ears
At even-tide, my mother calls
Again as in the vanished years;
My father's voice in blessing falls
Sweetly thro' mem'ries sounding halls.

In these familiar rooms I see
Dear faces of the long ago,
And like ethereal minstrelsy,
I hear, in gentle cadence flow,
Their speech, in accents soft and low.

Again beneath the attic roof
I seek my childhood's humble bed,
And woven in the warp and woof
Of dreams, full many a magic thread
Of light illumes the sky o'erhead.

But not the joys of life alone,
Came to us in the passing years:
God sent affliction, and the moan
Of suffering, and the tide of tears,
With alternating hopes and fears.

But God is good and kind, we know,
Unto His own; He knoweth best,
And when our feet too weary grow,
He gently beckons to our rest
Within the mansions of the blest.

And though the grave hath claimed its own,
And time and fate have opened wide
The gates of change, and overthrown,
The idols of our love, and pride,
Lie desolate the grave beside;

Yet in the circle of the years,
Our blessings overtop our woe,
And through the rainbow of our tears,
We see the sun of evening throw
Its glory on the earth below.

And through its golden mists we see
Sweet glimpses of the life to come,
Of the Reunion yet to be
When Night shall bring the children home
And Death shall turn the silent key.

ONLY A TRAMP.

Only a tramp! in the glare and heat
Of the summer sun in the dusty street.

Only a tramp! with a dingy pack,
And a threadbare coat on his weary back.

Only a tramp! and soiled and brown,
He made his way through the busy town.

Only a tramp! and wealth and pride
Looked, and passed on the other side;

And childhood paused in its merry play,
And shrank from the passing form away.

Only a tramp, the housewife said,
As she turned away from his plea for bread;

Only a tramp, but he felt the smart
Of the taunting words, in his human heart,

And bitterly sighing, he turned again
To his heartless journey, and life of pain.

But there where the railway meets the street,
Was stayed the tide of passing feet,

And horror palsied the bravest limb,
And eyes with fruitless tears were dim,

For a truant baby boy had strayed
To the railroad track, and calmly played

Between the rails, with the pebbles white,
Piling them up in the sweet sunlight,

And the fast express was thundering down
At fearful speed through the busy town.

Fruitless the driver's skill to stay
The flying train on its headlong way,

Fruitless the shrill alarm to fright
The little one from his pebbles white.—

But out from the crossing of the street
Dashes a man with flying feet;

Each silent watcher held his breath,
In that fearful race for life or death,

Till the truant babe was safely thrown
Beyond the rails as the train swept on.

The child was safe, but rods away
Bleeding and lifeless, the rescuer lay!

Only a tramp! but forever new
Is our love for manhood brave and true!

And the mother, that night, who fondly prest
The living child to her grateful breast,

Will ne'er forget, as the seasons roll,
That hungry tramp with a hero's soul!

"MAKE ME PURE WITHIN."

1890.

In the tumult and the strife,
Of a busy, struggling life,
Night and morning, everywhere
Be this thought my humble prayer,
"Cleanse from word or thought of sin,
Make and keep me pure within."

In the office or the mill,
Let this thought be with me still,
In my intercourse with men
In my words of tongue or pen,
Hold my life aloof from sin,
Make and keep me pure within!

In the great world's busy mart,
Be this thought my sailor chart,
Lest my feeble footsteps stray
From Thy straight and narrow way;
Let me, as a jewel, bear
In my heart this simple prayer.

When with weary feet I turn
Where the social watchfires burn
On the cherished hearth of home,
Let this inspiration come
Like a benediction still,
Sanctifying heart and will.

Father! point my onward way,
Hold my hand from day to day,
Grant me for my soul's defense,
Strength from Thy Omnipotence,
Through the world beset with sin,
"Make and keep me pure within!"



ICE BOUND

Far south the sun rose, and his rays
Kindled the treetops in a blaze
Of glory which the artist's skill
May never copy. On the hill
The forest trees were bending low,
With burnished silver all aglow

(See Poem).

ICE-BOUND.

1892.

First Month 15th, 1892.

Our Whittier sang of Snow-Bound,
And tuned his touching lays
To the rhythm of the old time,
And simple country ways;
Be mine the humble duty,—
The theme as grand and true,
To tell of Nature ice-bound,
This year of Ninety-Two.

'Twas winter, and the fallen snow
Was white on wood and field; the glow
Of evening faded into night,
Yet not to darkness, for the light
Of the full moon came drifting down
In slumb'rous waves upon the town.
Not the clear silver glow that seems
The ideal moonlight of our dreams,
But tangled in the murky bars
Of haze and mist, that quite shut out
The twinkling of the silent stars,
But compensating, wove about
The moon's pale face an aureole
Fresh from Refraction's mystic hand,
Which Nature's children understand
Portends the coming of the storm.

Down the long streets the serried ranks
 Of incandescent lamps aglow,
Flung out their dazzling rays, that fell
 In sparkling whiteness on the snow;
And falling from the maple boughs
 Which in the chill wind swing and sway,
The moving shadows, sharp and dark,
 On pavement and on sidewalk lay;
While darkly rising high aloof
Were ghostly spire and spectral roof.

And thus the night came down. The wind
Was moaning fitfully without;
Within, the cheerful hearth about,
Is gathered from the toil and care
Of the world's tasks, its work and wear,
The members of the household band.—
Happy the man for whom the night
Brings rest and comfort, and the bright
Enjoyment of the social life
Of home, where mother, sister, wife
Or children, sanctify and bless
His lot with love and tenderness.—

When morning woke the world again
From slumber, on the window pane
We heard the music of the rain,
The patter of the tiny feet,
And solemn voices of the sleet.

And thus all day the clouds that hung
 Low over wood and field and town,
From out their folds of darkness flung
 Their wealth of liquid droplets down,
Which, freezing as they fell, became
Of other form and other name.

The day of darkness and of rain,
 Without a glimpse of sun or sky
 To cheer its brevity, went by,
And brought the silent night again.

So pass our days of sorrow,
 So come our nights of tears,
But we find that God's tomorrow
 Is brighter than our fears,
And we find the cherished sweetness,
 And the ecstasy of life,
Are following up the bitterness,
 The anguish and the strife,
And Heaven's angelic anthem
 The discord of our life.

So when the morrow came again,
Forgotten was the gloom and rain;
We only saw the beauty spread
Around, beneath, and overhead!

Far south the sun rose, and his rays
Kindled the tree-tops in a blaze
Of glory which the artist's skill
May never copy. On the hill
The forest trees were bending low,
With burnished silver all aglow!
Upon the nearer shrubs and trees
The icy sheathing hung, and these
With hues prismatic greet the eye,
Like those that arch the summer sky.

E'en the unsightly weeds that grew
 Upon the roadside, now became
 The peers in fact, if not in name
Of lily white, or violet blue.

Icicles from the eaves o'erhead
Hung like a thousand crystal spears,
Forged by the Frost King from the tears
The dark and pitying clouds had shed.

The drifts of snow, beside the road,
In beauteous forms and bold designs,
With sweeping curves and graceful lines,
In the same brilliant armor, glowed.

Poles on the street-side in the sun
Stand glistening, and the wires that run
From post to post, like ropes of glass,
Through which the electric currents play,
Catch up the sunbeams as they pass
And fling them glorified away.

Such lavish beauty everywhere!
Such loveliness of field and wood!
Even the pure transparent air
Seems throbbing with the voiceless prayer
Of Nature in her reverent mood!

Teach me, Oh! Father, more to see
That all the beautiful and grand
In nature, speak aloud of Thee,
And gladly own Thy forming hand.
That all the sparkling gems of light,
That dance and glitter in our sight,
Ruby and sapphire, that a king
Might envy, Thou alone could bring
To grace the shining earth today,
And make more beautiful and sweet
The pathway for Thy glorious feet.

THE RAILROAD WRECK.

1892.

Out in the storm of the winter night,
Bounding on in its headlong flight,
With trundling wheels on the iron way,
Wildly urged by the piston's play,
Throbbing and panting, with hiss and roar,
Speeding each minute a mile or more,
Through the frosty air and drifting snow,
Was the night express on the B. and O.

Within the coaches, all warm and bright,
Lying, reclining, or bolt upright,
The sleeping passengers dreamed away
The hours that carried them on their way.
But there, as the train swept 'round a curve,
Thrilling with horror his brain and nerve,
Full on the eye of the engineer
Burst a coming headlight, bright and clear!

A click of levers, a rush of steam,
The wild alarm of the whistle's scream,
And wheels reversed, but all too late
To save the train from its fearful fate!
A crash! a shock! and the piteous cries
Of pain went up to the midnight skies!
And shout and curse, and moan and prayer,
Strangely blent on the shuddering air:
And over all this horror there came
Roaring and crackling, the pitiless flame;
Till the heavens, aglow with lurid light
Seemed bending in pity over the sight
Of so much anguish in one sad night!

But why this wreck, with its loss untold
Of treasure counted in paltry gold?
With the wringing hands and bitter tears,
And wounds that the heart must bear for years?
With its score of human beings lost
In that night's terrible holocaust?
Why that train on the railway track?
Only the meaningful word comes back,
"Drunken!" Alas! but sadly true!
A railway train with a drunken crew!

Oh rum! thou demon of crime and sin!
Curse of the age we are living in!
When will the nation arise and draw
Over thy traffic the ban of law?
When will the people who bow to thee
Rise in their manhood, and dare be free?
God will rebuke thee! welcome the day
That rolls the weight of thy curse away.



VOCAL WINDS.

1893.

As I sit within my room,
In the twilight's deepening gloom,
While the autumn wind without
Flings the withered leaves about;
At my doorway shrieking, sighing,
With a sad and plaintive crying
Do I hear it,
The wild spirit
Of the wind.

Oh! the voices of the wind!
Oh! the music that we find!
In its wild and reckless playing,
In the sobbing and the swaying,
In the treble and the droning,
In the weird and solemn moaning,
In the moaning,
And the droning
Of the wind.

Sweet the notes, to him who listens,
As the dew of springtime glistens,
On the earth grown warm and tender
In the season's vernal splendor;
With her balmy lips confessing
To the rhythm and the blessing;
To the blessing,
And caressing
Of the wind.

And the summer, full of sweetness,
Full of Nature's own completeness,
Smiles to catch the soft refrain
Of the wind among the grain,
Of the fragrance-laden breeze,
And its music in the trees,
Trembling ever,
To the quaver
Of the wind.

And the autumn, growing old,
In his robes of red and gold,
Hears the low and stifled moan
Of the wind's sad monotone,
And the brown leaves downward flying,
Hears them rustle to the sighing,
To the sighing,
And the crying
Of the wind.

And like a monarch on his throne,
The winter, sad and hoary grown,
Still joys to hear the north wind sweep
O'er snowy hill and stormy deep;
Joys in the melodies that find
Voice in the howling of the wind;
In the howling,
And the growling
Of the wind.

Thus the seasons tell the glory,
And the winged winds the story,
How their notes of music fall
Earth-ward from the Lord of all,
As He touches heaven's own keys,
Waking wondrous harmonies,
And rejoices,
In the voices
Of the wind;

Like an echo from the past,
When through God's creation vast,
Burst the song through heaven that rang
When the stars together sang,
And the echo seems to float,
Like some stray Eolian note,
Still ringing,
And singing
In the wind.

QUAKERISM.

A poem written for a meeting of the "Wilbur Union," one year after its organization.

He, in whose sight, a thousand years
Are but as yesterday, when it is past,
Has in the swift procession of the days,
Brought us again into the month
Of singing birds, and blooming flowers,
Filling for us, the circle of the year.

And as we stand upon the threshold
Of the new and the untried, our feet,
Unsteady, falter, and our thoughts
Anxiously question of the coming year,
Its duties and its possibilities.

Inspired by hope we turn the page,
Trusting His Providence who holds
The key to all success, to crown
Our feeble efforts, that our aim
May be the strengthening of the walls
About our Quaker faith; may be
The awakening of an interest
Warmer and deeper, in the truths
Our fathers taught us; Fox and Penn,

Pennington, Barclay, and Parnell,
And Burroughs,—many more whose names
Are household words, whose suffering
And undaunted courage in the right
At last outwearied persecution,
And bequeathed to us the legacy
Of freedom in religious faith.

How do the lives and consecration
Of those strong, earnest men and women,
Co-workers in equality, devoted
To the Master's service, shame our lack
Of zeal! How weak and indolent
Our lives, while still the fields are white
Unto the harvest! Why this failure?
Since our greatest happiness depends
Upon obedience to the call Divine?
When for the smallest service done
In His own name, God doth reward
So richly? Hath the world more charms
Than Heaven? Or would we willingly
Barter our birthright for a trifle?
Like the son of Isaac, who afterward
Sought vainly and with tears, the blessing
Forfeited and lost. Or would we see
The Church forsake the lofty plane
Of its pure spiritual teaching,
And abandon the sweetly solemn
Thought of the Divine indwelling?
The true baptism and communion
Of the Spirit? The faithful walking
With God, personal, everpresent?

No, no! The world still greatly needs
The influence of our Quaker faith!
Its teaching must not yet be lost
On the high levels of religious thought!—
The vantage ground from which the sunshine
Of Eternal truth, reflected, falls
Upon the valleys, touching all
The world of thought with added glory!

To-day we need, as much as e'er before,
The spiritual touch, and fellowship
Of Christ; The broad and comprehensive
Plan of His salvation, free to all!
And these, our faith is teaching still;
And as our lives are brought under
The sweet control of Christ's pure love
'Twill beautify our thoughts and acts,
Ennobling every heart wherein it dwells,
And touching every life with which
It comes in contact, with new beauty.

Thus our daily lives may preach anew
The gospel of the SAVIOR. Thus again
The light of Quakerism, brighter shine!
Thus may our second year excel the first
In humble service which the Lord may own;
And may our eyes attentive look to Him
For guidance in the path our feet should go.

DISARMAMENT.

Written upon hearing of the promulgation of the call for a "World's Peace Conference."

Hark! from the Northland issue joyful notes,
A prophecy of glad days yet to be!
Let all the bells from their resounding throats
Ring in the glory of earth's jubilee!

Peoples and Nations reaching forth their hands,
To hail the time when War's red scourge shall cease!
God speed the day when rulers of all lands
Shall greet the reign of universal peace!

Aye! greet the glad day that the prophet saw,
When nation shall no longer strive with nation!
When Right and Truth are moulded into law,
In the high courts of legal arbitration!

May the Peace Congress of the world relieve
The throes of nations and their fierce unrest!
Bridle their petty jealousies, and weave
Some fragrant garlands for the world's opprest!

And may the Prince of Peace therein preside!
And teach again the love he taught before!
Rebuke the lust of power, the vaunt of pride,
Revive the brotherhood of man once more!

The children of a common Father, we,
In the great family of nations, stand!
May God forgive us that so blind we be,
His plans of mercy not to understand!

Forgive us! that our human hearts, so long
Inured to scenes of blood should cruel grow!
Nor shudder at Cyclopean wrong
Of war, with all its train of crime and woe!

War! that in with'ring storms of shot and shell,
Upon the land or on the boundless seas,
Has spread destruction, like the breath of hell,
Down the long vista of the centuries!

How long it takes the world to understand!
Aye! all these nineteen hundred years of grace,
The force of Christ's disarmament command
"Put up thy sword again into its place."

Put up your swords! Oh nations of the world!
Hush the wild war-cry, and the cannon's roar!
May the near future see your war flags furled,
And Peace enthroned on every peopled shore!

"HOW BEAUTIFUL TO BE WITH GOD."

Last words of Frances E. Willard.

"How beautiful to be with God! with God!"
Cried the lone watcher, from the gloom of night,
As the first dawning of the eternal morning,
Touched, e'en earth's shadows, with its glorious light.

"How beautiful to be with God!" What visions
Of Heaven's fruition opened to the eyes
Of the sweet spirit, passing to inherit
One of those many mansions in the skies!

What visions broad and full and satisfying
To every longing of the Christian soul!
Unfailing joy, pleasure without alloy,
And Christ's sweet love to circumscribe the whole!

What vistas of eternal verdure lying
Beyond our ken, allure the pilgrim feet!
What bursts of song and rapture surge along
The countless archways of the golden street!

Pass in, dear, tired one! through the open portals
Loose thy worn sandals, lay thy burden down!
Past the cross-bearing: comes the bliss of wearing
The aureole of Heaven, the starry crown.

No more the heart-ache, and no more the weeping,
Closed are thine eyes to earth, but full and free
From heavenly hills, with clearer vision sweeping
The boundless reaches of Eternity!

Infinite realms of pleasure and of beauty!
Whose shining slopes by angel feet are trod!
What harps are ringing, and what voices singing
"How beautiful to be at home with God"!

IN STORM AND CALM.

1895.

Old ocean, grand and beautiful!
What varying moods are thine!
What changeful glory overspreads
Thy face, with shade and shine!

When the summer days are tranquil,
And the storm winds are at rest,
How calmly sail the stately ships
On thy gently heaving breast!

Like a fleecy cloud slow sailing
On the waves of the upper deep,
Its white wings filled with the breezes,
In their steady onward sweep.

But when the winds complainingly
Are moaning to the ocean,
How instant rise the tossing waves,
Onsweeping in commotion;

White crested, hurrying leeward,
Scourged onward in their wrath,
How angrily they howl and dash
About the good ship's path.

How like a toy the mountain waves
In their tumultuous sweep,
Toss the huge ship upon their crest,
Then fling it in the deep.

Great torrents sweep her upper decks,
The sea-trough yawns below!
While on the steamer's side the waves
Smite with terrific blow.

But the good ship reeling, staggering,
Through storm-swept night and day,
Obedient to her helm, bears on
Her own unerring way!

Thanks to the human skill that guides
Our pathway through the sea,
Whether in storm or calm, holds on
Her course, unerringly;

But greater thanks to Him who holds
On sea, or on the land,
The destinies of men and worlds
In the hollow of His hand!

A WEDDING LETTER.

To a niece.

Dear Eva,

On thy wedding day
Thou wilt forgive me as I pray
From a full heart of love, that He
Who graced the feast in Galilee
May at thy marriage too, preside.
And not alone upon that day,
But all along thy future way.
His love within thy heart abide;
His presence on thy pathway shine,
Turning life's water into wine,
Walking forever at thy side.

Thus in the struggle and the strife
That crowd into a busy life,
Over the weariness and pain
Of tingling nerves and aching brain,
Over the tempests of dismay,
Of doubt and darkness, when the day

Seems big with sorrow, then His voice,
Bidding the trembling heart rejoice,
Will echo through the spirit's halls,
 And as of old, the heart will thrill
 With rapture, as His "Peace, be still,"
Like a sweet benediction falls.

I cannot ask for you the boon
 Of happiness, without alloy,
Else Heaven would have no charm, and soon,
Like day declining at its noon,
 Would fade away from life, the joy.
But may your happiness consist
 In loving and in doing good
For love's sweet sake, till Duty's list
 Is filled completely. So I would
Wish only for so much of shine,
As seemeth in the plan Divine,
To be the best for you; the rain
Is just as needful, and the pain
And weariness of life may be
Our sweetest blessings. Then may we,
In simple faith, our burdens bear,
And walking with the Lord in prayer,
Know day by day his guiding hand,
Leading us to the Better Land.

Could I crave more for you than this?
More nearly unalloyed bliss?
Than when the human passion thrills
Two hearts, more tender and complete,
By sitting at the Master's feet,
Adorned by the Christ-love that fills
The soul and spreading outward gives
Sweet influence to other lives.

Oh! may this influence sanctified
Be yours, as onward, side by side,
You tread life's journey, until Heaven
Be gained, the crown be given,
Until your rich reward be won
In the Lord's answer of "Well done".

VALEDICTORY.—Class of '95.

Today, in expectation standing
Upon the foothills of the greater height
To which we turn, where, wide expanding,
New vistas open to our wondering sight,
New fields of usefulness, new hills of light!

And, pausing thus, we catch with eager ears,
The swelling strains of hope, that sweetly blend
With the glad prophecy of coming years,
That sunny skies above our paths may bend,
And all success our forward steps attend.

But as our asking eyes instinctive turn
Unto the future, in hot tears they swim;
For though we catch the gleam of hopes that burn
Within the shadows, indistinct and dim,
As our eyes sweep the far horizon's rim,

Yet to the past we fondly cling. Again
Would live our happy school days o'er with you
Dear friends! today. Would catch the sweet refrain
Of old familiar voices, glad and true,
And in this hour our friendship would renew.

Would grasp again each kindly hand
Outheld to us, and we would gladly own
The many obligations that must stand
Forever to your credit; not alone
The service rendered, but the kindness shown.

The ready sympathy, the cheerful word,
The hearty helpfulness along the way
So freely given, our hearts have often stirred
To greater effort, and the broader play
Of powers, outreaching to the brighter day.

For thee our Alma Mater, we would crave
Rich blessings from our Father's open hand;
Send forth thy sons and daughters, strong and brave,
To take their places in our busy land,
Equipped by thee for right and truth to stand!

And for the Faculty whose loving care
Has watched and guarded, amid hopes and fears;
In grateful love we breathe the silent prayer
That Heaven may strengthen for the future years,
May bless your labors, and may dry your tears!

But one of you is not!* Her tears are dried,
Her labors o'er. For her the eternal rest.
Sadly we miss her, but we must abide
The trial, trustful that God knew the best
In calling to the Mansions of the Blest.

May you forget the evil said and done,
Forgive our follies and our failings. Strive
In charity to think of battles won
O'er wrong and selfishness, and keep alive
Remembrance of the Class of Ninety Five.

And school-mates all! with hearts that overflow,
We turn to you, desiring that the sum
Of happiness and usefulness may go
With you; that wrong, and crime, and sin be dumb
Before you, till the end of life shall come.

Go forth into the world! So strive, so live,
That future years some good of you may tell!
Love God and all mankind, and often give
A kindly thought to us who say farewell!
Teachers, and schoolmates, and kind friends, fare-
well!

*Referring to the death of Lucinda Bailey, one of the valued teachers.

VALEDICTORY.—Class of '99.

CLASS MOTTO

"With the ropes of the past, ring the bells of the future."

We stand today, with foreheads bare,
Upon the threshold of the dim
And untried Future, and with brows
Fanned by the gentle airs that blow
Upon us from the misty hills
And sun-kissed valleys; with the light
Of hope descending from the heights
And reaches of the Unattained,
We turn our faces forward, earnestly
Seeking to know and fill our place
In the world's round of business,
And among its busy workers.

We would not loiter in the race
Of life, but struggling on, would aim
To do and be something worth while
The living; and gathering up
Rich treasures from the hoary Past,
Would make of them the ropes with which
To ring the Future's sounding bells!

May we, for our example, take
The character of Christ the Lord!
And with His Golden Rule to teach,
His ever present Light to guide,
Our feet may safely press the path
Of life, that leads, we know not where;—
So thick the curtain that God hangs
Between the unknown and the known.

But standing at the outer door,
That guards our school life here,
We pause a moment, and with eyes
Suffused with tears, must say adieu!

We love our Alma Mater! From
Its halls, regretfully we turn
To other scenes, unknown, untried—
Unto the Faculty, whose care and help
And helpful guidance, have been like
A tower of strength, in which to trust,
We would express—but here words fail
To tell the thanks we feel.

Accept
In lieu, the love we fain would speak.—
And schoolmates! unto you we owe
A debt of gratitude, too great
Thus to discharge. Your loving words
And kindly, helpful deeds, cheerful
Companionship, and kindred thoughts,
Have like an inspiration been,
Which we cannot forget.

Backward
Our glances turn today, upon
The paths which we have hither trod.
Joys we have had, and also griefs
Together borne. With you we mourned
The bright young life, which in its morn
Of promise, faded and went out
Among us; to be rekindled,
As we trust, in greater glory
In the Better World.

But the time
Of parting hastens! Brokenly
We say farewell! For in the years
To come, we may drift wide apart,
And 'mid the world's devious ways
See little of each other. Yet

We crave for us and you, the boon
Of mutual remembrance! Soon
In the swift circling of the years
Will come life's eventide. Oh! then
As on its western slope, still rests
The glory of its setting sun;—
As through the Golden Gates, ajar,
Float the sweet echoes of the bells
Of God! Oh! may we meet again,
A glad, united, and unbroken band,
And hold our great Reunion
On the shining hills of Heaven!

THE BEST OF FRIENDS.

1901.

How sweet to feel that we have a Friend,
All-seeing and Omniscient,
Whose help and power, in every hour
Of trial are sufficient.

How sweet to know and feel this Friend
Is ever-watching o'er us,
And to feel and say, "the same rough way
His feet have trod before us".

How sweet to feel that though our days
With sorrow are redundant,
Yet His sweet peace, as the sad hours cease,
Is recompense abundant.

And whether the day be dark or bright,
Whether rough or smooth the road,
If the Best of Friends our way attends,
His help will ease the greatest load.

Others may fail us, our human friends
May turn away in the hour of need;
But our "Elder Brother", than any other
Is safer, truer, a Friend indeed!

And though, sometimes, we may sadly say,
As our faith grows weak, and so dim,
"They have hid away my Lord today,
And I know not where they have laid Him."

Yet the morning light will surely come,
Oh! then sad heart never fear,
Though the night be long, the morning song
Is "The risen Christ is here."

And now in the spirit's equipoise,
Though our eyes be dim with weeping,
'Tis sweet to know, that the ebb and flow,
Are still in the Master's keeping.

Then whether in daytime or at night,
In His secret presence hiding,
May we ever find, with quiet mind,
The place of a safe abiding.

Oh! then, dear Lord, may we ever stand
On the watch tower, day by day,
For the way is long, the foes are strong
That are haunting the onward way.

But Thou art stronger than all our foes!
Thou art kinder than all our fears!
And we beg to stand at Thy right hand
In the struggle of the years!

In the struggle of the years to come,
With Heaven to be lost or won!
Give grace, we pray, for every day,
And a crown when the days are done.

THE TEMPTATION.

1904.

Alone in the great wilderness
Of Judah, forty days and nights,
The world's Redeemer sadly passed,
In patient learning of the long
And weary human lessons, fraught
With the more trying things of life,
Which in unerring Wisdom were
To make the dear Christ perfect, through
The suffering which it cost Him.

There, among the hoary mountains,
And the bleak and blackened rocks,
He wandered. Alone the wild beasts
Of the desert watched His steps
With curious hungry eyes, but stopped
And slunk away, and hid themselves
Deep in their lairs, as when the day
Breaks o'er the eastern hills, hiding
The stars, and hushing all the voices
Of the night; so fled the desert
Fauna from the fearless presence
Of the humble Nazarene. Only
The angels keeping guard by day
And night, sustained and strengthened
Him in His deep loneliness.

Alone? Ah no! Satan was there,
And with his wily, cruel presence
Followed the Master's steps. Morning
And noon and night, the Tempter's voice
Was in His ears, and, skillfully,
The Arch-Deceiver, then as now,
Aimed his temptations at the point
Of possible weakness. But not
On human weakness fell the bolt
Of strong temptation. High defense

Was there! Useless the devil's wiles,
Even his lying promises
Of glory, wealth and power fell
Harmless on the immaculate soul
Of Christ! And when He turned His eyes
Full of reproach, and grief, and scorn
On him, the Tempter writhed and fled
Before the stern rebuke He gave,
"Get thee behind me."

Weary one,
Sad and disheartened, with thy faith
Failing, because the Tempter seeks
Thy soul, take courage! Turn thine eyes
To Christ, who dared the weary days
And tedious nights of that dark
Wilderness, that He might become
The victor o'er temptation, and
Succor the tried and tempted ones,
Who come in faith to Him.

His grace
And sovereign mercy can dispel
The clouds of doubt, and can rebuke
The sin, or great or small, that like
A hideous nightmare haunts thee.

Not in vain the Lord's temptation!
The perch upon the temple's spire,
The glorious outlook from the top
"Of the high mountain". These led up
To the more lofty heights whereon
Crowned with love Divine, and with
His great heart filled with pity,
And with infinite sympathy
For mankind in times of trial,
Or temptation, or affliction,
Is Jesus Christ our one High Priest,
Standing before the great assize
Of Heaven, our Intercessor,
Our Advocate with the Great Judge
At His tribunal bar on high.

THE LOG-BOOK.*

1904.

At sea with a chart and compass,
And the arching sky o'erhead,
With the outward breezes blowing,
With all her canvas spread,
Our school like a good ship sailing
Outward and ever away,
Must heed the hand of the pilot
On her helm by night and day.

But what of chart or compass,
Or the breezes blowing free,
Unless we know where we would go,
Our pathway through the sea?
The Captain turns to his log-book,
And his way is plain and clear,
His records run, from sun to sun,
And his course is written there.

So we today, in our log-book,
Are keeping a record true,
Of our whereabouts, our ins and outs,
Of the things we say and do,
The course we take, the distance gone,
The points where the rocks abound,
Our latitude, and longitude,
In the log-book may be found.

So read the compass and the chart,
Record our speed and bearing,
Map out the way, that others may
Be safer for **our** faring;
That others may, in years to come
From it, fresh lessons borrow,
The skill of hand, the strength to stand
In many a dark tomorrow.

*The "Log Book", was the name of a little paper published by the Whittier Literary Society, for the columns of which this little poem was written.

"MONTHLY MEETING."

1904.

This little poem was written while at the Boarding School, at Barnesville, in answer to one with the same title written by one of the students.

The story of Monthly Meeting,
And the Olney student's ways,
Was told by the author neatly,
And in rich poetic phrase;
And we much enjoyed the picture,
And the memories it may bring,
But perhaps a shade too sombre,
Was the artist's coloring.

Perhaps he saw the gloomy side,
Be mine to show the bright one,
Be yours, dear friends, when both are seen,
To choose and hold the right one.
Perhaps both views may help us reach
Our definite objective;
Perhaps both views may help bring out
The meeting's true perspective.

Be sure the meeting house is plain,
Also the Friends who meet us,
But a kindly face, and pleasant word
Are very sure to greet us.
And many an earnest wish is felt,
As the coming Friends are seating
On the long benches, that the Lord
May bless our Monthly Meeting.

And in this quiet time and place,
Though some in the meeting hour,
Through sleep neglect the means of grace,
And miss the Spirit's power
To lift the mind from earthly things,
To a quiet meditation
On the love Divine, that ever brings
Joy in its contemplation;

Yet many souls that gathered there,
The Father's name confessing,
Through the Savior's help, and silent prayer,
Received the promised blessing.—
The hush of the silent hour, to them
Pregnant with thought and feeling,
Is touching the Master's garment hem,
And His precious hands of healing.

For some a time of strife and pain,
A struggle with self and sin,
Till "get thee behind me" comes again
From the voice that speaks within.—
The tempter leaves; and there baptized
With love from the healing Fountain,
Is the waiting soul transfigured quite,
With Christ alone on the mountain.

In the humble life of the Christian,
An hour like this is sweet;
To steal away from the busy world,
And sit at the Master's feet.
To hear His words in the soul's ear,
And to feel the glad surcease
Of the tossings of the billows,
At His gentle word of peace.

And so while sleep has fettered some,
In the hour so still and fleeting,
Others have better and stronger grown
From the service of the meeting:
Hearts grown brâve and true again,
In the silence that came o'er us,
To battle on in the stress and strain,
In the path of life before us.

THE HERO OF FREDERICKSBURGH.

1904.

'Twas on the field of Fredericksburg!
And the battle's fiery breath
Was hot all day, and hundreds lay,
At night, on the field of death;
But the darkness brought no respite,
For the deadly guns roared on,
Filling with fright, the terrible night,
From dusk till the break of dawn.

And still the shells were screaming,
And the awful leaden rain,
Was sweeping still, from hill to hill,
Over the maimed and the slain;
And the lurid clouds of battle
Hung heavy and dense o'erhead,
And there, un-nursed, and mad with thirst,
Lay the wounded with the dead.

Oh! the moaning and the groaning!
And the cries of wild despair,
Blended with the cannon's roaring
To o'erload the shuddering air!
Oh! the plenitude of sorrow!
Oh! the bitter floods of tears!—
Dear, pitying Lord! what wild discord
Goes up into Thy ears!

Smiting on Richard Kirkland's ears
Came the anguish of that day!
A soldier boy of Fredericksburg,
In his uniform of gray;
And the hero sought his Captain,
And before his tent he stood,
Begging to go to friend and foe,
On that dreadful field of blood,

With water for the thirsty ones,
To stanch the wounds that bled,
With comfort to the dying boys,
And a tear for those, the dead!—
The captain sadly shook his head
As he slowly answered "No,
'Twould cost your life, my boy", he said,
"In that murd'rous fire to go."

But strong the hero's earnest plea,
And the captain gave consent,
And with food and water, over the works,
This angel of mercy went;
And there on the field of slaughter,
While the deadly missiles flew,
Unhurt he sped, where duty led,
To his Christlike mission true.

Quickly the soldiers saw the deed,
And the guns upon the hill,
That swept so long the fatal field,
In the early day grew still.
And thus for hours the battle stayed,
Awed by a deed so bold,
Till the echoes died, on the mountain side,
And the cannon's lips grew cold.

Oh! would that this brief armistice,
To eternal peace had grown!
And the demon of war forever
Been lost in the dim Unknown!
That the glorious deed of Kirkland,
Forever should put to shame
All who would win, through crime and sin,
Renown by this Moloch's name.

Too long War's hateful enginery,
O'ersweeping field and flood,
Has filled whole lands with sorrow,
And deluged earth with blood;
And the crime of human slaughter
Where'er its hosts have striven,
And battle's yell and "smoke of hell"
Too long have wearied heaven!

When shall the flags of war be furled?
Its bellowing thunders cease?
And all the nations of the world
Ring in the reign of peace?—
Too long has might been held as right,
In the Council Halls of state!
Too long have the ears of Infinite Love
Been filled with the cries of hate!

Help us, dear Christ! to realize
That thy great, eternal plan,
Is built on love to God above,
And love to our brother man!
That Thy heart is touched with pity,
For us, in our human pain,
And that love to Thee, will keep us free
From the sin and curse of Cain!



AUTUMN DAYS.

1894.

Oh! the beauty and the splendor
Of the glorious autumn days!
As the sunshine, warm and tender,
Streaming through the purple haze,
Touches all the fields with glory,
Gilds the valleys sweet and bright,
Paints the hills, wood-crowned and hoary,
With a touch of heaven's own light.

Till the many colored iris,
Which the hand of nature weaves,
Carpets all the woodland pathways
With a garniture of leaves;
As the gorgeous hour of sunset,
Sets the western heavens aglow,
With a richer, rarer beauty
Than the mid-day hours may know;

So the autumn, summer's sunset,
With its bright and brief days, brings
Beauty all unknown to summer,
Or the budding times of spring;
Richer hues than grace the tropics,
Set in brown, and red, and gold,
All ablaze, yet unconsuming,
Like the "Burning bush" of old.

Hushed are many cheerful voices,
Of the summer's happy reign,
But the passing year rejoices,
O'er the ripened fields of grain;
Where the quail's loud call is ringing
From the stately shocks of corn,
And the cardinal's sweet singing,
Wakes the echoes of the morn.

In the wood the squirrels chatter,
As they store the brown nuts by,
And the grackles with their clatter,
Vocalize both earth and sky.
And the crow's departing clan-call,
Summoning for southern flight
Greets our ears; the solemn hooting
Of the owl makes sad the night.

Lonely too, the cricket's chirping,
And the katy-did's shrill call,
And the moaning of the night wind,
As the trembling leaflets fall,
But all vibrate to the pulsing
Of Dame Nature's heart in tune
With Beauty, holding carnival,
'Neath the glorious harvest moon.—

The seasons all are beautiful,
Spring, with its lovely flowers,
Its greening fields, its feathered choir
A-song in shady bowers,—
The summer's breath is fragrant,
And bedecking hill and plain,
Wave the graceful flaunting forests,
And fields of ripening grain.

And winter too, of sterner mood,
Is lacking naught of glory,
With crystal field, and naked wood,
And snow drifts weird and hoary.
But still, to me the sweetest days,
Are those when the skies are clear
And soft with Indian Summer haze,
In the autumn of the year.

VALEDICTORY—CLASS OF '05.

Swiftly the passing hours have lapsed
Into the bright, brief days, and these
In turn merged into weeks, until
The score is filled, and we to-day
Pause, standing at the outer threshold,
Where our ways diverge, and from this
Vantage point, catch brighter glimpses,
Broader views, and clearer visions
Of Life's varied fields.

The future
Lies before us with its misty hills
And sun-kissed valleys; and the sheen
And shimmer of the UNATTAINED: whose vistas,
Indistinct, yet beauteous, open
Before us; and as hills peep o'er
Each other, in the glorious field
Of some bright summer landscape,
So its freshness and the beauty
Of its ever changing pictures,
Like a great kaleidoscope, are
Luring onward. Ambition, too,
Is beckoning to us, calling
Us on to honor, wealth, and fame.
But well we know her siren voice
Is oftentimes delusive; only
An Ignis Fatuus, hovering o'er
Destruction's wide and fatal marsh.

Oh! may we, with our eyes upon
The hills, whence cometh all our help,
Our ears attentive to the voice

Of Christ the Lord, within the soul,
Our hands touched with the cunning
Of the Artisan of Nazareth,
Go forth into Life's manifold
Environments, and seeking first
To know what is worth while, seeking
To harmonize our plans with God's,
Let us take up the duties lying
Nearest us; taking our place
In the world's round of business,
And among its earnest workers.

We are ambitious, in a sense!
We would be rich and noble! Rich
In faithful struggle for the right,
In conscious joy of duty done,
In honor, won by self-denial,
By love to God and human kind.—
Noble in that broad sense, that sees
In the uplifting of the race
To higher levels, broader views,
And worthier aims and plans,
Far more of glory than in all
The wars with which earth has been curst.

Thus we indulge, today, our hopes,
Our aspirations; thus we build
Our castles.—Looking back, we see
Along the way we have together trod,
Much to remember; much to give
Joy in the remembrance. Mingled
However, with the joy, there comes
A shade of sadness, at the thought
Of opportunities neglected,
Of words and deeds not flavored

With the grace of Christian courtesy,
Of kindly words unsaid, and deeds
Undone.—These we deplore. Alone
We would remember kindly thoughts
And loving words and deeds: only
Recall sweet memories of the past!
Floods of these rush over us to-day,
Filling our hearts with tenderness,
Our eyes with tears.—To the Faculty
We turn with grateful recollections
Of patient toiling, kindly words,
Of helpful aid, self-sacrifice,
And deep devotion to your trust,
To your high calling.

Unto you
Dear schoolmates! comrades in the work
Of building character, that shall
Endure the strain and stress of life,
The thought of leaving you, and all
The fond associations of
Our Alma Mater, moves our hearts
With deep emotion, as we stand
Before you now to say adieu!

This world is full of partings
And farewells, but in the afterwhile,
When all life's lessons have been learned,
There comes the great Commencement!
Close of this life, commencement
Of the life to come! Then farewell now!
And may we all so live, that when
Our vessel's keel shall touch the bar
Upon the other shore, sustained
By faith and love Divine; our brows,
Bared and turned heavenward, may feel
The air celestial, like the voyager
From far off climes, who, nearing home,
Catches the fragrant land breeze in
His beaming face, with a sweet sense
Of home and rest and happiness.

KEEP YOUR GLASSES BRIGHT.

Lines written on receiving a chamois skin for my spectacles on which was printed, "If you would see the world aright you must keep your glasses bright."

Dear Alice!
'Tis a pleasure
To see the world aright,
And may we ever do so,
As we keep our glasses bright.
And may our inner vision
Be clarified as much,
To see the things eternal, by
The Master's cleansing touch.

But we often see so dimly,
And our faith seems, Oh, so small!
We often fail to recognize
His guiding hand at all!
We sometimes feel to grope our way
Uncomforted and alone,
And sigh and say "How dark the day!"
And our strength is almost gone.

But when the dear Lord rubs away
The dust from our spirit's sight,
And we see His finger pointing
Up and onward, to the light,
How brightly the sun shines 'round us,
How blue are the skies above,
How faith takes hold with joy untold
Of the dear Redeemer's love!

And so, dear friend! may we ever,
Be keeping our glasses bright,
These for the earthly and outward,
And those for the inner sight!—
Seeing with these, the beauty
So lavishly spread abroad!
Seeing with those, the grandeur
Of the infinite plans of GOD!

IN RECOGNITION

Of the reception of a beautiful rocker, a present from the Students at Friends Boarding School, Second Month 17th, 1906.

Tonight your kindliness of thought
Into our inmost hearts has brought
Untold emotions, and the rise
Of happy tears to brimming eyes,
Dimmed by the mist of sweet surprise.

We fain would thank you, but the word
Seems meaningless, our hearts are stirred
Beyond the depth of common speech,
Beyond the lingual plummet's reach,—
Or phrases that the schoolmen teach.

But as eye answers unto eye
In that quick human sympathy
Of soul, wherein another may
In some occult mysterious way
Read the mute thanks we cannot say;

So you may feel how deeply moved
We are today, and how beloved
By us, are you whose kindly care,
And generous bounty, rich and rare,
Have furnished us this easy chair.

And as the seasons come and go,
And shades of evening 'round us grow
And lengthen, ere the darkness falls
Along Life's dim mysterious halls,
And ere its vesper chiming calls

To rest; we'll sit, and there recall
Your forms and faces one and all;
Craving that Faith and Hope may mate
In us, and help us all to wait
Serenely by Life's outer gate.

THE SILVER WEDDING DAY.

Third Month 27th, 1907.

Five and twenty years together,
We have lived, dear Wife, today!
Clouds and sunshine softly blending,
All along our life's highway,
As we see it, looking backward
From our Silver Wedding day!

And although we sometimes wearied
Of the days of strain and stress,
Though we had our cups of Marah,
Nights of pain and of distress;
Though hope sometimes almost failed us,
And our faith seemed growing less,

Yet the dear Lord's loving kindness
Followed us from day to day,
Kept our hearts when strong temptation
Whispered, "Cast your trust away"!
Bared His arm of strength to help us
O'er the trials of the way!

And today, dear Wife! as standing
Out beyond our threescore years,
With our children gathered 'round us,
Through the mist of happy tears
We can dimly see how wisely
Working out, God's plan appears!

May thy plans, dear Lord, be ever
In our minds to dare and do!
Keep Thou us, and keep our dear ones,
Unto Thee, our Father, true;
Follow with Thy Holy Spirit
All life's coming journey through.

And as sinks the sun of evening
Grandly toward the glowing west,
May we feel the sweet assurance
Of a welcome to Thy rest;
May we feel through boundless mercy
That our last days are our best.

A BIRTHDAY RHYME.

For Edward Stratton on his eighty-sixth birthday, Fifth Month 20th, 1908.

Dear Father,

In this month of spring,
Of flowers and beauty, I would bring
A garland woven into rhyme,
To celebrate thy birthday time!
To tell thy years, fourscore and six!
Away beyond the lines that fix,
According to the Master's plan
Of human life, the alloted span—
Beyond the common bounds of life,
Beyond the common point, where strife
And sorrow cease, and rest begins!

How fresh before my thoughtful eyes
Visions of long ago arise!
How weeks and months are set aside,
And backward turns the ebbing tide
Of years, at Memory's stern command,
And lifting with her magic hand,
The shroud that hides the dim and vast
Assemblage of the buried Past;
Upon the Present seems to show
The scenes of forty years ago!

Aye, more than forty years the tie
Of filial love and unity
Has bound together, and has kept
Our lives in touch; and we have wept
At the same sorrows, and the sun
Of happiness that often shone,
Diffused its genial after-glow
Upon us both, and high or low,
In unison our lives went on
Together toward the setting sun.

And now together down life's hill
We go, and soon the shades that fill
The valleys, shall around us creep
And multiply, and grow more deep,
Until the night comes on apace;
God grant us! that His radiant face
May glorify death's gloomy night,
And lead us upward to the light,
Beyond the reach of earthly ills,
And onward to the Heavenly Hills!



AT SEVENTY.

Eighth Month 23rd, 1908.

A poetic letter to my brother, Nathan H. Edgerton.

Dear Brother,

How the winged years
Flit by us with their smiles and tears,
And with, mayhap their doubts and fears,
Till Time, grown bolder,
Plays pranks with us along the way,
Touches anon our locks with gray,
And sometimes forces us to say
"We're growing older!"

But looking backward to the days
When we were boys, the golden haze
Still seems to linger o'er our ways
Of present duty;
Until we feel like boys again,
Instead of old gray-headed men,
And our quick pulses thrill as then
With life's new beauty.

Again among our native hills
We play, and set our toy mills
A-running in the meadow rills,
With childish laughter,
Or hunting eggs among the mows,
Or brown nuts from the chestnut boughs,
Or bringing home the truant cows,
The day's work after.

And when the shining spring returns,
And the bright sugar-camp fire burns,
Or later, as the plowshare turns
The dark soil over,
Or when the harvest's bounty pours
Its plenty through the great barn doors,
And heaps about the threshing floors
The fragrant clover,

How vividly before our eyes
These visions of the past arise,—
Reflections caught from boyhood's skies—
Seen through our tears!
Faces and forms that gathered 'round
The old home fireside, and the sound
Of voices that the years have drowned,
Is in our ears.

Upon life's stage, how wide the range
From pain to pleasure, and how strange
The quick transition, and the change
From joy to sorrow,
And in the shifting of the play,
We see the boys of yesterday
As the gray-bearded men to-day,
And gone tomorrow!

And we, Dear Brother! come to stand,
A decimated household band,
Our feet upon the "Border Land"
Today are prest!
Life's weary race so nearly run!
Thy threescore years and ten now done!
How surely life's descending sun
Sinks to the west!

Oh! grant, Dear Lord! that after all
Our strenuous life, ere the night fall,
Our ears may hear the sweet home call
Sounding from far,
Like a sweet harp, o'er which the wind
Of God is blowing! may the Mind
Eternal, lead us on to find
Heaven's gates ajar!

NOT KNOWING.

1908.

I may not know how deep and wise
And perfect the design
Of Providence, that underlies
This selfish life of mine.

We cannot grasp His glorious plan,
With mercy interwrought,
Transcending all the powers of man
Is God's omniscient thought!

We may not know why stress and strain
And sorrow come and go,
Nor why sometimes disease and pain
And doubting overflow,

Until the clouds seem all too dense
To witness Hope's arising;
Beyond the reach of sight or sense
Seems Faith's serene horizon!

We may not hear through unbelief,
 Tomorrow's benediction,
In the storm-centre of our grief,
 Today's severe affliction.

And yet, not knowing, we would trust,
 Our simple faith confessing,
That God, o'erruling all, is just,
 And rich in love and blessing!

And we may know, in following out
 His plan's complete unfolding,
The secret of His peace, nor doubt
 His own secure upholding.

Increase our faith, dear Lord, in Thee!
 Dispel all doubt and fearing!
Open our spiritual eyes to see,
 Quicken our sense of hearing!

That we may note Thy "Still small voice"
 In life's unwritten story,
And see beyond the clouds of doubt,
 The gleam of heavenly glory!

May know the spirit's harmony
 Within our hearts upwelling,
And the sweet comfort, day by day,
 Of Thy divine indwelling!

DRIFTING.

1908.

Oh, to see our loved ones drifting,
 Drifting from us day by day!
Powerless to arrest the ebb-tide,
 Setting outward and away!

Oh, to know that those whose living
 Merges so into our own,
Dread disease, relentless, cureless,
 Marks and stalks them as his own!

Oh, to see the mute appealing
 Of the eyes that look in ours!
Pregnant with the heart's deep feeling,
 In the lapse of Nature's powers!

Oh, to feel the dear hands clinging
 To us in the strain and stress!
How our hearts are crushed and humbled,
 In our very helplessness!

Oh, our Father! in our weakness,
 Let us closer press to Thee!
Oh, fulfill Thy blessed promise,
 "As thy days, thy strength shall be!"

Give us wisdom, give us patience,
Give us strength from day to day!
Faith to keep, and love to guide us,
Safely on life's weary way!

And as drifting, drifting outward,
Toward where life and death divide,
Grant, dear Lord! Thy holy presence!
Help us to be satisfied!

Thankful that 'mid clouds and darkness,
Through Thy own abounding grace,
We may sometimes catch an earnest
Of the glory of Thy face!

Take our drifting dear ones, Father!
Into Thy especial care!
Be to them their all-sufficience,
Is the burden of our prayer!

Comfort with Thy benediction!
With Thy arm of power sustain!
Supplement, as Thou canst only,
Failing strength, bewildered brain!

And when past the tribulations,
Past the sorrows of the way,
When the clouds and gloom roll backward,
From the dawning of the day,

May our loved ones who are drifting,
Drifting from us toward the west,
Safely glide into the harbor
Of eternal peace and rest!

AT REST.

1908.

Dear patient hands! that for so long
 In the world's work have wrought,
So truly and so faithfully
 Fulfilling every thought
Of love and duty! now to-night
 Lie meekly on her breast!
Weary of toil, and thin and white,
 They find eternal rest!

Dear willing feet! that faltered not,
 Life's rugged paths to tread!
Devoted feet! that ever ran
 The way where duty led!
Poor tired feet! no more you go
 The ways so often prest!
Your steps grown feeble, short, and slow,
 Tonight has brought you rest!

Dear kindly eyes! so full of love,
 And love's sweet care for me,
Turning so fondly to her friends,
 With hearty sympathy!
Beautiful eyes! that looked in mine,
 With a strange, longing light,
As sickness wore her strength away,
 Are closed for aye, tonight!

Dear careful lips! so prompt to own
The good by others done,
So slow to recognize her own,
Or tell her victories won!
Sweet lips! to mine so often prest,
Fragrant with love's pure breath,
And with her simple earnest prayers,
Tonight are hushed in death!

Dear heart! that loved so long and well,
So guileless and so true!
That clung to us so tenderly,
Life's weary journey through!
Loyal to us and to her God!
Its feverish pulsing o'er,
The heart so steadfast and so brave,
Is stilled forevermore!

Sweet soul! grown weary of the weight
And burden of the years!
Grown weary of life's suffering,
Its sorrow and its tears!—
I thank thee, Lord! for the sweet time
That she hath dwelt with me,
To-night Thou callest home again
Her pure white soul to Thee!

HER PRAYER.

1908.

"Dear Father! watch thou o'er me,
I cannot go alone!
The way is dark before me,
The night is coming on."

So prayed the patient sufferer
Upon her bed of pain,
Till the evening shades grew vibrant
With the spirit's sweet refrain.

No studied phrase adorned it,
Her simple heart-felt prayer,
But the soul's yearning warmed it
With life and beauty rare.

And as its accents trembled
Within her quiet room,
The very air seemed fragrant
With heavenly perfume.

And the sky above seemed clearer,
The earth beneath more fair,
And Heaven itself seemed nearer
For the treble of her prayer!

AFTERTHOUGHT.

1908.

Although I feel how desolate
My life henceforth must be,
Yet as tonight, I sit and wait,
Thinking of Heaven and thee,
I would not call thee back to life,
With all its toil and pain,
From that sweet home above, dear wife!
Which I too, hope to gain.

I would not want to change God's plans!
My time, or brief or long,
Is in the blessed Master's hands,
And He can do no wrong!
I would not sorrow over-much,
But wheresoe'er may be
My way, Oh may I walk in touch
Dear wife! with Christ and thee!

And may my life conform below,
To God's all-wise design!
Seeking His blessed will to know,
And knowing, make it mine.
But well I know the flesh is weak,
My only sure defense,
Is through the coming years to seek
Help from Omnipotence!

But as I fondly think of Thee,
From weakness disenthralled!
From life's infirmities set free!
To higher service called!
I can but long for that bright land,
Where God shall dry our tears,
And cause to dwell at His right hand
Through the eternal years!

THE HOUSTONIAS.

1909.

I have transplanted you, sweet flowers!
 Modest and blossoming,
Upon the grave of one who loved
 The coming of the Spring!

Like you, a sweet simplicity
 Adorned her life of beauty!
Content in humble guise to walk
 The quiet ways of duty!

Content to occupy the sphere,
 Where Providence had placed her,
Using the talents and the gifts
 Wherewith the Lord had graced her!

The gospel of unselfishness
 Her daily life was preaching,
A simple faith and childlike trust
 Were lessons of her teaching.

A mother to the motherless!
 Her noble nature giving
The sweet aroma of a life
 Of pure and saintly living.

But that sweet life has passed away!
 I can but bow in sorrow
Above her grave, and ask for strength
 To meet each coming morrow.

Strength to enable me to live
More worthy of the sweetness
Of her who brought, to home and life,
Such womanly completeness!

Help me, dear Christ! more faithfully,
Her bright example heeding,
To follow on from day to day,
Her gentle spirit's leading:

That I may in the time to come,
Fulfill my humble calling,
And hear the Master's sweet "Well done"
When sunset shades are falling.

And may we meet, when life is o'er,
Within the jasper portal,
The loved ones who have gone before
Into the life immortal!

LITTLE MOTHER.

1909.

Darling little mother,
In her easy chair!
Face aglow with kindness!
Crowned with silver hair!
Oh! what charming pictures
Memory paints today!
Of the gentle mother,
Ere she went away!

Many a mid-life picture,
With the long bright days
Full of summer's sweetness,
And its golden haze;
With the children gathered
Round about her knees,
Learning useful lessons
Of life's ministries.

Sowing in the spring-time,
For the autumn's yield,
Watching for the first fruits
Of the harvest field!
Doors ajar for comers,
'Mid her many cares
Sometimes entertaining
Angels unawares!

And when ev'ning shadows
Fell across her way,
As her strength diminished
With the fading day,
Beautiful the evening
Lights and shadows blend,
Like her blessed Master,
Loving "to the end."

And as from life's threshold
Little mother passed!
As the weary burdens
Fell from her at last,
Heaven's doors swung open
At the set of sun,
And her ears were greeted
With her Lord's "Well done."

ANNIVERSARY NIGHT.

Eighth Month, 28th, 1909.

Tonight my busy memory
 Holds up in strong contrast,
The droning of the Present,
 With the treble of the Past;
Tonight the floodgates open
 To the torrents of my grief,
And only in a storm of tears
 My spirit finds relief,
In the sweet and calm assurance
 That the soul that passed away
At the coming of the night-fall
 One year ago today,
Has all these months been dwelling
 In that bright world of bliss,
Unvexed by any weakness
 Or weariness, of this.

Yet even this assurance
 Can scarcely put to flight
The loneliness and longing,
 That fill my soul tonight;
As, sitting in the stillness
 Of her room, I see again
The group around her bedside,
 And hear her breath of pain.
Oh, the hush that fell upon us!
 In that solemn moment, when
The world of spirits seemed so near
 Unto the world of men;
When the sweet eyes forever
 Closed to the scenes of earth,
And in Death's silent coming,
 Eternal life had birth!

I feel how deeply lonely
Has been my chastened life,
Since that sad hour at gloaming
When God called home my wife!
But as I bow submissive
Unto His holy Will,
There comes into my spirit
A whisper, "Peace be still."
And I would own how kindly
The Father's hand has led
My halting footsteps onward,
And how His love was shed
Abroad! I fain would thank Him
For mercies, and the power
That all my life hath led me,
Unto this very hour!

And I would make, this evening,
My Darling's prayer my own,
"Dear Father, watch Thou o'er me!
I cannot go alone!"—
So oft' my courage fails me,
And faith grows weak and small,
Help me, dear Lord! to follow
Thy guiding hand through all!
Help me to bear more bravely
The loneliness, the tears,
To struggle calmly onward,
And meet the coming years.
And Oh! when time shall bring me
To where the years shall cease,
May my ears catch the anthem
Of God's eternal peace!
And in the full fruition
Of hope and faith, may know
A sweet and glad reunion
With those I loved below!

CENTENARY.

Written on the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Mary J. Koll, First Month 10th, 1910.

We ask not that the sun stand still
 Today on Gibeon,
Nor that the moon her orbit fill
 To-night in Ajalon!

No miracle of power we ask,
 But make the earnest plea,
For grace to meet each daily task
 Bravely and cheerfully,

As she whose birth we celebrate,
 Whose years of toil and strife
Should cheer us on to emulate
 The beauty of her life.

We would not have the tide of years,
 For us to-day be stayed,
The record of its hopes and fears,
 Forevermore is made

For her who calmly, sweetly meets
 The trials of her way,
Whose lengthened, useful life completes
 One hundred years today!

One hundred years! How very few
 See their centennial day!
While many die, ere yet the dew
 Of youth has passed away!

But she whose years we joy to tell,
 Has rounded out fivescore!
Whose fellow trav'lers fainting fell,
 Life's highway passing o'er,

Until alone she stands today,
 In her simplicity!
Her generation passed away!
 "The last leaf on the tree."

And we would crave, what yet is meet
 Of life for her may be
Spent at the blessed Master's feet,
 From sin and sorrow free:

Knowing the Christian's hiding place,
 Here, where the years increase!
Looking for Christ's abiding place,
 When the swift years shall cease.

And we to-day, would gladly own
 God's overruling power,
In many a time of trial shown,
 Unto this very hour!

And may we now and ever own
 His good and wise design,
And our life's constant undertone
 Still blend with the Divine.



BAPTIZED WITH FIRE

Burning of the Boarding School, Barnesville, Ohio. Third Month, 31st, 1910.

BAPTIZED WITH FIRE.

Fourth Month, 1910.

O, bleak bare walls! how desolate
And sad your gloomy silhouette,
Clear-cut, against the blue spring sky,
Is thrown upon the beautiful
And quiet background of the hills!
The smiling hills, that erstwhile stood
Guard around thee, and the cheerful
Happy throngs that came and went,
Year after year, a joyous tide
Of pulsing life a-through thy halls!

Oh Olney! spot so dear to all
Who shared thy blessings! how today
My heart is filled with sadness,
And my eyes with tears! hot tears
Of grief, as I recall the many
Fond associations of the past
Through my brain thronging!

Now baptized
With fire our Alma Mater stands!
But as I gaze upon these walls,
Blackened and bare, and swept with flame,
I seem to see an earnest of
Its resurrection. Loving hands
Out-reach to clothe again these walls
With the habiliments of life,
Of loving service, lofty aims,
And golden opportunities!

From east and west, the messages
Of loving sympathy, of faith,
Of succor in the hour of need,
Come as an inspiration; and
From rich and poor alike, the help
Is freely given! Strong manhood,
Loving womanhood, age, trembling
Upon life's frontiers, and childhood,
Rich in hope and promise, all alike
Are pressing through the open door
Of Opportunity, to build
About these walls, a richer fane,
A Phoenix risen from the ashes
Of the Past!

May we all arise
To meet this opportunity,
Coming but once, and briefly,
To a generation! May we choose
Wisely and well, nor sacrifice
Unto the brief and fleeting Present,
Those tremendous issues of the long
On-coming Future, radiant
And big with possibilities!

The chance has come to us, to step
Into the breach, and by a grand
Self-sacrifice repay the debt
Of gratitude we owe unto
Our Alma Mater! If we thus
May measure up unto the call
The Future makes upon the Present,
In the years to come, our children
Will not blush because we failed
To do our duty in the time
Of need that tried the souls of men.



THE NEW BOARDING SCHOOL PLANT

A Phoenix risen from the ashes of the past

LOVE'S MIRACLE.

1910.

Two lonely lives were drifting
 Adown the tide of years,
Each with its heritage of pain,
 Each with its hopes and fears;
Each with its own misgivings,
 And transient smiles and tears,
Each bearing, as alone it could
 The burden of the years.

But drifting on, as nearer,
 These lonely lives were drawn,
New interests seemed to 'waken,
 New hopes began to dawn,
And there was less of sadness
 Upon each heart and face,
And Faith, and Joy and Gladness
 Were blooming in its place.

Oh! Love, thou great transformer!
 What wond'rous power is thine,
To change Life's common water
 Into the rarest wine!
To change the gloom of twilight
 Into the light of day,
The snows and cold of winter
 Into the flowers of May!

And if this human passion
 Can so transform our lives,
If from the Eden exodus
 This touch Divine survives,
May not our human loving,
 In GOD'S o'erruling be
The blending of our dual lives
 In one, dear Christ, in Thee?

INDIAN SUMMER DAYS.

1910.

The autumn days are brief and chill,
The autumn skies are gray;
The glory of the summer time
Has faded quite away.

But out upon the breezy hill,
The quiet forest ways,
Are carpeted with red and gold,
Unknown to summer days.

The asters in their regal blue,
The dusty roadside cheering,
Their gay plumes nodding in the wind,
To leeward gently veering,

The brown nuts dropping from the boughs,
Lie 'midst the leaves down-falling,
The solemn voices of the wind
Are sweetly, gently, calling.

Nature has clothed the field and wood
With beauty and with sweetness,
And autumn seems to crown the year
With all the year's completeness.

And still we look for days of shine,
Of shimmer, and of gladness,
Before the snows of winter come,
The short, dark, days of sadness.

We look for those bright dreamy days,
Filled full of love's sweet story,
The overbrooding purple haze
Of "Indian Summer's" glory.

And I, dear friend! have thought how bright
 Life's Indian Summer beauty
May glint along its downward slopes,
 And light our paths of duty.

And glorify the common things,
 In the brief days before us,
And brighten with a touch Divine
 The clouds that may drift o'er us.

UNDER THE STARS.

1910.

 What glorious sights,
 These winter nights,
My western windows see!
 As to my eye
 The starlit sky
O'erarches wond'rously!

 Immensity
 I seem to see!
Beyond the Milky Way
 The heaven's archways
 Are all ablaze
With stars and nebulae!

 Our keen eyes sweep
 The upper deep,
But far beyond our sight,
 Are God's frontiers,
 Whence, through the years,
Flash in these rays of light.

Let me expect,
When stars reflect,
The glory of Thy face,
To know, dear Lord,
Thy still small word,
In this our trysting place!

And oh, dear Christ,
In this sweet tryst,
My guardian spirit be!
Help me to hold,
Or new or old,
My covenants with Thee!

LIFE'S DESERT PLACES.

1910.

"Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile."

—Mark VI., 31.

"Come ye apart and rest awhile,"
So spake the Lord unto His own
Who followed Him from day to day,
Amidst the throng of those who came
And went, till they had weary grown,
And needed quiet rest. So oft
The cares of life press heavily,
And the long way seems very dark.—
This the dear Lord knew, and led them
Out into the desert's silence,
Where alone with Him they might,
Within the quiet solitude,
Be comforted and strengthened
For the mighty work before them.

And thus God often leads His own,
Even now as then. The desert
May seem wild, and lone, and vast,
The very type of desolation!
But from its very loneliness,
Its silence, and its vastness, through
Divine Omnipotence, comes all
The needed strength, the courage,
The endurance, to complete
The service which He calls for,
And for which He thus prepares
His children.

From preparation
Such as this, God called His servant,
Moses, from the desert's rim
Nigh unto Horeb, for the work
To which he was appointed.
There in the desert, God had taught
To him the needed lessons
For the leadership of all
The mighty people, whom, by grace
And help Divine, he was to bring
From abject slavery, and all
The degradation that exists
Therein, into the freedom
Of the promised land.

Such too,
The training that the poet-king
Of Israel underwent, when
God would choose a man to reign
Over His people; the youngest
Among his father's sons, and
Shepherd of his flocks, whose soul,
By silent intercourse with God
Through all the long bright days
Spent with the patient flocks among
The hills and fields of Bethlehem,
Had kept so close in touch
With the Divine, that when the time

Of Saul's rejection came, the boy
Was furnished for the mighty task
To which God called him.

God is,
In all His ways consistent.
Ere He called the son of Amram,
To lead unto the exodus
The Hebrew hosts, Omniscience
Saw the legislator in
The shepherd of the desert.
Ere the prophet poured the oil
Upon the head of Jesse's son
Infinite Wisdom saw the
"Perfect heart," the glory of
The reign of David.

And to-day,
When God calls into service
Whom He will, His own right arm
Will still uphold His instrument.
And as we walk with Him in faith,
Depending on His power
And guidance, He will lead us
Through all the trials of our way.
And as our eyes are fixed on Him,
And with our ears attentive
To His "still small voice," we,
In the end, will find it true
That "Unto him who hath no might
He still increaseth strength."

And,
From these resting places in
The deserts, whether of sorrow,
Or temptation, or disease,
If we but cling to Him in faith,
And press more closely to His side,
We may emerge into the world
Of active service, with a braver
Heart to follow on, within
The path the Master's feet have trod.

LOVE. (A Letter.)

1910.

As I say farewell, my darling,
 As I turn from thee today
To home and other duties,
 I can but hope and pray
That God may keep and bless thee,
 And shield from every harm,
And lead thee safely forward,
 By His Almighty arm.

His presence has been with us,
 In many a lonely hour,
His love has touched our human love
 With its ecstatic power;
He has reached our founts of feeling,
 And the charming interflow
Of deep and strong affection
 Has warmed our life below,

With an earnest of the sweetness
 Of His never failing love,
Which in its full completeness
 Forever reigns above!
Keep us, Oh! loving Father,
 So close in touch with thee,
That in the glorious afterwhile,
 From sin and sorrow free,

We may dwell with Thee forever,
 In Thy happy home above!
Where nought may separate us
 From the rapture of Thy love!
Above, beyond the human love,
 And sanctified by grace,
Where through the years eternal
 We may behold Thy face!

AT SIXTY-SIX.

Seventh Month 12th, 1911.

Threescore and six! how swift have past
The winged years! How brief the whole
Of human life! how long, how vast,
Eternity! Be wise, my soul,
Redeem the time; and holding fast
The hand of God, press onward to thy goal!

What is thy goal? Oh, may it be
Nothing beneath the stars of light!
But outward, upward, to the free
Expanse of Heaven, sweet and bright
With God's smile, and the charity
Of His great love; to walk with Him in white.

Help thou me onward then, dear Lord!
Feeble my will, nor have I power,
Without the quick'ning of Thy Word,
To keep me for a single hour
In the wild whirl of life, unheard
Of Thee, unsheltered by Thy love and power.

Oh, may I then, in the few years
Still left me, walk more near to Thee
Dear Christ, than heretofore! If tears
And sorrow are dispensed to me,
Help me to bear them, still my fears,
And lead me through the toils of life to Thee!

Thou hast bestowed so much of good,
The sweet home ties, blessings of love
And peace, of health and daily food!—
All these should lead my thoughts above,
To Thee, in filial gratitude,
Prompting my loyalty to Thee to prove.

Help me more faithfully, Oh Lord,
To do the things Thy will appoints,
And as Thy "Still small Voice" is heard,
And as Thy spirit still anoints,
May I be prompt to speak Thy word,
And my feet hasten where Thy finger points.

"THE THRESHOLD OF THE YEAR."

New Year's Eve, 1911.

Upon the threshold of the year,
Tonight my feet are stayed,
Behind, the unreturning past!
Before, the future, dim and vast!
But on God's care the load I cast,
I need not be afraid!

His love through all the years has led,
Shall I not trust Him still?
And through whatever may betide,
If I keep closely at His side,
I'll trust His loving care to guide,
His promise to fulfill.

I ask not idleness, dear Lord,
 I fain would work for Thee!
If Thou wilt all my being fill
With a deep reverence for Thy will,
And strengthen for Thy service still,
 Thy servant I would be.

If the Eternal God may be
 My refuge, day by day,
And if His everlasting arm
Be underneath, no wild alarm
Should shake my trust, or bring me harm,
 In my appointed way.

Beyond the threshold of the year,
 I know not what awaits,
But I would come, dear Lord, to Thee,
Trusting Thy love's sweet ministry
To lead, and guide, and be with me,
 Unto life's outer gates.

THE BLIZZARD.

1912.

A blizzard, aye sure a blizzard!
 On the heels of the sleet and rain,
With scourge of snow, on the winds ablow,
 And frost on the window pane;
 And a chill like death
 On the blust'ring breath
Of the wintry hurricane!

The day's wild hours of tumult,
With their wrack, and rush, and blow,
Faded without the cheerful light
Or warmth of the sunset glow;
As it were, blown out
In riot and rout
By the stifling swirl of snow.

Within, by our village fireside,
We gather, the hearth about,
And list to the storm wind's chorus,
Like a solemn dirge without;
Like a cry of pain
Was the wild refrain
Of the blizzard's wail without.

Fierce spirit of the tempest, hush
Thy loud and reckless crying,
Tone down thy boisterous jubilee
To notes of gentle sighing!
And pass by the door
Of the suffering poor,
Thy cruelty decrying.

There was erst, enough of sorrow
For the lowly to confess,
Enough of hunger and of cold,
Enough of strain and stress;
But the storm's rude height,
And its chill tonight,
Are adding to their distress.

God pity the poor forlorn ones!
His destitute ones today,
Help us to feel our brotherhood
With the poor on Life's highway;
Keep us close to the drift,
With a strong uplift
For the fainting ones today.

TO JANE EDGERTON

Tenth Month 19th, 1912.

On her eighty-ninth birthday.

Dear Cousin,

On this day of days,
I fain would bring to thee
An added joy, a note of praise,
A glimpse of life to be
In full fruition of our hopes,
Beyond life's tossing sea!

Thy fourscore years and nine, indeed
Have touched thy locks with gray,
But in thy heart's deep shrine, no need
Cries out for sunnier day;
Life at its best still wears for thee
A cheerful face today!

'Tis true the joys of the Springtime
Developed long ago
Into the Summer's fruitful prime;
Now Autumn's breezes blow!
But still we find on heart and mind
Life's Indian Summer glow.

And we today, our thanks would say,
For the blessings God hath given,
For the times of doubt that found us out,
For fields where we have striven,
For strength thus won, to bear us on
Through mercy, nearer Heaven!

For Thy power to save, we thank Thee
Dear Lord, through all the strife,
The endless toil and endeavor,
And weariness of life,
And to keep our tryst with Thee, dear Christ,
In the eventide of life!

THE WESTWARD TRAIL.

When the westward trail of "Forty-nine"
Was luring away to camp and mine,
With visions of hasty fame and wealth,
Of western homes, and rugged health;
'Twas a long wild way, the "Overland",
Of plains, and mountains, and barren sand,
With long miles stretching from east to west,
Onward and up to the Rockies' crest,
And thence away on the sunset side
Of the wondrous summit, the "Great Divide".

Long toil ahead, when the march began,
For the "Prairie Schooner" caravan!
Long weary toil for horse and man,
The laboring flight of the moving van!
With the faithful wives and the little ones,
A ready target for Indian guns!
An intruder to the wild coyote,
To the grizzly, and the mountain goat;
A flaunt to the fiercest winds that blow,
A fright to the nomad buffalo;
And this prolonged through weary weeks,
Ere he gains the goal his fancy seeks.
At night in tent, or in bivouac,
The migrants sleep on the westward track,
With pickets to guard against attack
Of hostile Indians, or bandit force,
Haunting the western emigrant course.

But now, how changed from the days of yore,
The "Prairie Schooner" is seen no more,
And westward bound, as we go today,

By the great "U. P." or the Santa Fe,
A double header, the "Limited",
With its "Mountain engines" groomed and fed
For a hundred miles or more of run
Without a stop, toward the setting sun,
"Dragging" a dozen Pullmans, or more,
Is off for the far Pacific's shore.

Wonderful triumph of art and skill!
Bounding ahead at the driver's will,
Cleaving the air like a sharp-edged knife,
Chasing along like a thing of life,
With roar and rumble, and stress and strain,
Dashing westward, the limited train!
Over broad rivers, by bridges crost
We thunder,—the rush of a mailed host!
Past cottage homes, through a constant change
Of scenes, and out on the boundless range,
Where the cattle graze, and the herds of sheep
Are folded in the corral to sleep.

But sleep comes not to the faithful crew
That run the train, but the whole night through,
At their posts of duty, wide awake,
And alert to every risk they take;
Speeding along through the darkness deep,
The eyes of the engineer a-sweep
Over the rails, where vividly bright,
Is thrown the glare of the great headlight,
As, hand on throttle, he guides the train,
Working together, the hand and brain!
All this, that we, in our berths asleep,
May safely rest through the darkness deep,
Preserved from the dangers of the way,
And rise refreshed for another day.

Thus day and night we are sweeping on,
From dawn to dusk, and from dusk to dawn,
Over the plains so long and so wide,
Or skirting the rugged mountain side,
Over the canyon's yawning abyss,
Close to the edge of the precipice,
Through the tunnels,—above the clouds
That float below, like solemn shrouds,—
Thence sweeping down through the great snow sheds,
Close to the peaks, whose snow-crowned heads
Stand clearly outlined against the blue
Of the western sky, while pictures new
And beautiful, come before our eyes,
In ever-changing, and glad surprise.

And soon our journey ends, the way
Across the continent, which they
Erstwhile required months to cover,
With untold hardships dotted over,
We now can make in luxury,
In four short days from sea to sea!

We praise the ability to plan
And execute, the skill of man
To overbridge all space, and turn
To peaceful use the powers that burn
And glow within him, and construe
The laws of Nature, to the true
And lasting good of all mankind,
Outworking through the courage given,
The plans and purposes of Heaven,
Harmonious with the Eternal Mind.

MOUNT PLEASANT.

Mount Pleasant! 'round thy classic hill
What fragrant memories cluster!
What varied thoughts our bosoms fill
As on this spot we muster
Our Friendly clans; our hearts in touch
With Nature's warm caressing
This summer day, hoping for much
Of uplift, and of blessing.

A day of Friendship's genial glow,
Filled up with happy meetings
Of the dear friends of long ago,
With warm and cordial greetings
Of newer friends, and kindred hearts,
Whose interest brings them here,
From near-by homes, from distant parts,
In this centennial year.

A hundred years! what changes sweep
Our human pathways over,
As tempests scourge the tossing deep,
Defying man's endeavor;—
So though the storms of Twenty-eight,
And Fifty-four swept o'er us,
Though sometimes grieving at our fate,
Yet Heaven still lies before us.

Around us are its beacon lights
And watch-fires brightly burning,
With these in view, may we be true,
From danger promptly turning,
Obedient to the Light within,
Its gentle guidance heeding,
Avoiding deed or thought of sin,
To follow in its leading.—

Mount Pleasant! many a valiant soul
Whose varied lines of service
Have blest the Church, and made the goal
Of life more plain before us,
Learned helpful lessons in thy School
For life's broad duties later,
Squaring them by the Golden Rule,
And our own Alma Mater.

Mount Pleasant! Olney! may your sons
And daughters, holding duly
Our Quaker faith, so he who runs
May read its message truly,
Its pristine zeal, humility,
And Christliness upwelling,
And overspreading all may be
The proof of His indwelling.

Thus may the new School and the old,
Be classed on history's pages
Among the forces that have told
For Christ, adown the ages;
For higher aims, for cleaner lives,
For greater faith to nerve us
By closer walk with God, to give
More consecrated service.

And may we daily emulate
His infinite forgiving,
Until our own lives illustrate
A better, holier living,
The glory of unselfishness,
The lure of Heaven above,
May these combine in all to bless
The Apostolate of Love!

The above lines were written for the occasion of a Centennial meeting at Mount Pleasant, Ohio, held Sixth Month 20th, 1913.

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